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ABSTRACT

This manual describes Teens As Community Resources, Incorporated (TCR) in Boston (Massachusetts) for those interested in how to start youth-run philanthropic efforts, using a peer leadership model or for those wanting to incorporate youth leadership and empowerment in a youth services organization. The introduction provides a brief description of what TCR does, the historical background, the underlying philosophy, and the characteristics that would indicate the need for such a model in other communities. The Peer Leadership Program is described in the following three sections: (1) "Hiring and Training" (the selection process and training for teen staff); (2) "Events and Ongoing Projects" (a rally, newspaper, conference, city council hearing, newsletter, program of enrichment, and tribute to teens); and (3) "Grants Process" (preparation and training and specific steps). The next section, "Board of Directors," describes directors' characteristics and discusses the process of incorporating teen involvement on the Board. Following this section is the "Epilogue," which discusses the new directions in which TCR is moving, resulting from the lessons learned during the pilot year described in this manual. The appendix outlines much of the "nuts and bolts" of the model referred to in the text by including interview questions and formats, training materials, event planning materials, enrichment activities, grants process materials, and other operational information. (JB)

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TEENS AS COMMUNITY RESOURCES

A Model of Youth Empowerment

BY DEBORAH G. LANGSTAFF

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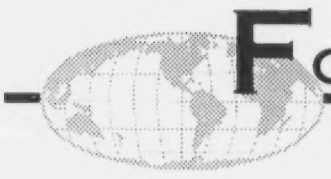


FOREWORD

The Plan for Social Excellence, Inc. is happy to have supported the implementation of a project by Teens As Community Resources, Inc. which resulted in teen involvement at all organizational levels and the preparation of a monograph to be used as a motivating piece and a how-to manual.

We believe *Teens As Community Resources, A Model of Youth Empowerment* will encourage school districts, community foundations, and local education funds to consider the creation of teen empowerment projects. Teens are indeed an important resource and every community needs to find the best way to invite them into full citizenship through empowerment and participation.

PLAN FOR SOCIAL EXCELLENCE, INC.

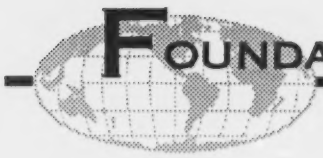
The Plan for Social Excellence, Inc. — a private foundation — came into being on March 16, 1990, through the change of name of The Lebensburger Foundation, which had been in existence since October 18, 1961. With the change of name came a change of missions, officers, and staff.

The Plan for Social Excellence has elected as its mission the bringing about of positive and measurable improvements in the areas of education and the environment. It supports projects that explore research results; evaluates and disseminates the results of such projects, and encourages the replication of successful projects.

The objectives of the Plan are put into effect primarily through five activities; seminars, grants, scholarships, technical assistance, and publishing. During its initial phase of activities, the plan will concentrate on educational matters. At the appropriate time in the future, it will initiate a similar set of activities in areas related to the environment.

The officers of the Plan have elected not to limit its activities to specific geographic areas. It will make grants and provide technical assistance wherever in the United States there is an opportunity to be of help. It will also distribute its publications and disseminate information about its efforts throughout the country.

The offices of the Plan for Social Excellence, Inc. are located at 116 Radio Circle, Mount Kisco, New York, 10549. The telephone number is 914-241-8690 and the telecopier number is 914-241-7476.



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Deborah Langstaff has worked as an organizational development consultant with a variety of organizations in non-profit and corporate sectors over the last ten years. Her work has focused on conflict resolution, team-building, management training, and addressing issues of race and gender. Langstaff has also worked extensively with community colleges as a faculty member and as an administrator, developing programs and curricula, addressing barriers to retention for students of color and for women. Over the last ten years she has taught courses and seminars in consulting skills, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills for math/ technical fields at both undergraduate and graduate school levels.

Langstaff received an MSW from the University of Washington in 1981, with a focus on counseling and group work. In 1991, she earned an Ed.D from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she concentrated on organizational behavior, negotiation and mediation, and leadership development. For her dissertation research she examined different approaches to addressing racism in organizations. Langstaff currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

PREFACE

Teens as Community Resources, Inc. (TCR) is a philanthropic youth organization in Boston, Massachusetts, which provides small grants and technical assistance to youth-initiated community service and advocacy efforts throughout the city of Boston. In addition to grantmaking activities, TCR is involved in direct advocacy and organizing around issues that affect youth, and the incubation of new youth-related programs.

TCR is not in the business of providing youth services in the traditional sense. Rather, the agency focuses its staff time on encouraging, supporting and training young people to take on leadership in their neighborhoods and to become themselves a resource for community change. At every level of the organization, TCR tries to demonstrate and reflect a model of operating that is guided and informed by the perspectives and ideas of teens. A unique characteristic of TCR, relative to other youth service organizations or philanthropic institutions, is that teens are involved at all organizational levels, as paid staff and as active members of the Board.

Another unique characteristic is having youth act as grantmakers in relation to their own constituency - other teens from similar socioeconomic and racial communities. At TCR, the teens on staff are directly involved in the grantmaking process. This enhances its effectiveness and relevance while modeling teen leadership and actively empowering teens involved at the different levels. In addition to the immediate benefits to teens and to the community, it is hoped that the experience of teens at TCR will continue to impact on the community when the teens become adults.

It is these characteristics which make the work of TCR innovative and exciting.

Teens as Community Resources really tries to address the lack of empowerment that teens are feeling right now. I think a lot of youth are feeling that there isn't anything positive for them, and they're not able to see alternatives and opportunities for themselves. We try to help youth feel empowered. Like they can and do make a difference to other people and their communities, and they can be part of a solution and not always be seen as part of the problem. We're really pushing for

leadership from the youth. They have the capabilities, I think they just haven't been tapped into and supported the way they need to be, financially and otherwise. (TCR staff member)

Purpose of this Manual

This manual is designed for groups that a) are interested in starting youth-run philanthropic efforts, using a peer leadership model, and/or b) are currently involved in services for youth, and wish to incorporate aspects of youth leadership/ empowerment more actively in the workings of their organization. This manual describes Teens as Community Resources, Inc. in Boston during the pilot year of incorporating teen involvement at all organizational levels. It includes a detailed description of the programs, the training involved, and the outcomes of the various phases. It is not so much a "how-to" manual as it is an account of what was done and what was learned in the process of building this model. Interested readers can take what seems relevant to their settings and apply it, taking into account the issues that have been identified. No single model will be applicable to every setting and circumstance. It is our belief, however, that many of the principles and perspectives discussed in this manual will be universally applicable, where the objective is to empower teens to promote positive change in their communities. We hope that this manual will inspire you as it reflects the exciting potential of youth empowerment and leadership development, and that it will provide you with some of the nuts and bolts necessary to implement these ideas in your community.

Contents of Manual

The *Introduction* to this manual provides a brief description of what TCR does, the historical background, the underlying philosophy, and the characteristics which would indicate the need for such a model in other communities.

The Peer Leadership Program is described in the next three sections: *Hiring and Training, Events and Ongoing Projects*, and the *Grants Process*. These sections describe the program through a step-by-step account of the pilot year: what was done, how it was done, what was learned, the experience of the teens involved, and so on. The hiring and training processes, the different project areas, and the steps of the grants cycle are all described in detail, incorporating materials from Teen Empowerment, Inc., an agency working collaboratively with TCR in the development of this model. Some of the specific procedural lessons learned during the year are noted in these sections.

The fifth section describes characteristics of the *Board of Directors*, and discusses the process of incorporating teen involvement on the Board.

Following this section is the *Epilogue* that discusses the new directions in which TCR is moving, resulting from the lessons learned during the pilot year described in this manual.

The *Appendix* contains much of the "nuts and bolts" of the model referred to within the text: training materials, workshop outlines, meeting agendas, and so on. It also includes descriptions of the non-program areas critical to the effective operation of the organization, such as personnel/staffing, site and equipment requirements, funding strategies, and public relations.

Acknowledgements

The writing of this monograph included significant contributions from Mary Fusoni, of Teen Empowerment, Inc., in both writing and editing, as well as from Tim Cross, Suzette Malveaux, and Stanley Pollack. I would also like to acknowledge and appreciate the time and energy given by the teen staff, the teen Board members and several adult Board members in their willingness to engage in extensive interviews. Thanks also go to the Director of the Plan for Social Excellence, Inc., Mario Peña, for providing the initial vision of the monograph.

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INTRODUCTION

TCR - History and Philosophy

Teens as Community Resources, Inc. was founded in 1986 with the intention of creating an organization that would engage young people in solving social problems in their neighborhoods and city. The idea was conceptualized by Jack Calhoun of the National Crime Prevention Council, Inc. in Washington, D.C. He brought the idea to John Ramsey of the Boston Foundation, and together they decided to develop a local pilot program based on the concept. The initial idea was fleshed out by a small planning group, who worked to formulate the project and build the Board. This group included Ken Smith, who was then the Executive Director of Roxbury YouthWorks, a program set up to work with court involved teens; Deborah Prothrow-Stith, who was the State Commissioner of Public Health; and Wanda Fleming, also working with Roxbury YouthWorks, who was brought in to help develop and write the proposal for the program. Of this group, Deborah Prothrow-Stith and Ken Smith continued on as co-chairs of the Board, with Wanda Fleming as the Director. As John Ramsey put it: "The initial vision was to proclaim to the community the conviction that teens are resources for the community rather than sources of apology or sources of concern to the larger society." In order to do this, the organization was set up to help groups of teens carry out projects that they had designed for the betterment of their communities, by providing small grants to cover the cost of carrying out these projects.

With strong support in the form of start-up funding from the Boston Foundation, TCR got off the ground in 1987 with a full-time director, office space and

supplies, and a pool of funds to award to groups of teens for community projects.

In 1989, after two years of operation, almost all of the projects funded continued to be initiated and largely implemented by adults. Decisions about how TCR grant monies would be spent were made by a 27-member Board of Directors that included only one teen. For the most part, the projects funded emerged out of already existing youth organizations; few grants went to the seeding of new youth initiatives.

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Incorporating the active involvement of teens at every level of the organization reflects a more holistic and integrated model of empowerment.

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From a community-wide Tribute to Teens event held in 1989 (see p.21), four new teens were recruited and trained to serve on the Board of Directors. However, TCR continued to be challenged by the problem of wanting teens themselves to conceive of, design and implement community projects. It was also evident that TCR's internal organization did not reflect the commitment and organizational makeup required of the projects being funded: that teens be trained and involved in all levels of decision-making. Tim Cross (TCR Director from 1988-1991) became convinced that if TCR's goal was to promote youth leadership, TCR itself should be a model of youth leadership in action. He turned the agency onto the path of involving teens and giving them positions of power and responsibility. For guidance along this path, Tim contracted with Teen Empowerment, Inc. which has developed a model for youth work that involves training teens to take on positions of responsibility and authority within their own programs. Teen Empowerment, Inc. has developed youth leadership programs for teen organizations located throughout eastern Massachusetts. (See Appendix for further information on Teen Empowerment, Inc.).

The decision was made to hire 6 teens as peer leaders. (The terms "peer leaders" and "teen staff" are used interchangeably in this document). Teens are now included and empowered at two levels: as full members of the Board of Directors, and as paid staff performing critical functions in the grantmaking process. The organizational structure does not draw distinctions between teens and adults; rather, the distinctions are between functions (staff and Board) that are performed by both teens and adults. Incorporating the active involvement of teens at every level of the organization reflects a more holistic and integrated model of empowerment. This is expressed by one of the peer leaders:

As peer leaders at TCR we have real decision-making power. That's one of the stronger things about working here. It makes the people who come here feel empowered; it makes you feel that what you say and what you do here is important. It actually means something to somebody other than yourself. I think that's one of the strong things about TCR as a group. The whole structure of meeting with other groups is to make people feel involved. It means a lot to the group as a whole.

What does TCR do? - Synopsis of activities

Youth Leadership Development

At the core of TCR's work in the community are its efforts to develop new youth leadership and to empower young people to become active, problem-solving members of their communities. Vehicles and activities for achieving this goal are:

- Teen Empowerment Training
- Hiring teens on staff as peer leaders
- Involving teens as members of the Board of Directors
- Teen involvement in direct city-wide organizing and advocacy
- Teens providing technical assistance and advice to youth groups wishing to organize projects in their neighborhoods
- Teens doing site visits, establishing funding criteria, and making recommendations for funding

Grantmaking / Youth Led Project Development and Implementation

TCR elicits community service and organizing ideas from young people who want to take steps to organize projects for positive community change in their neighborhoods. TCR also provides technical assistance to young people to help them develop ideas for community projects and strategies for building long term youth organizations.

Twice each year, TCR reviews proposals from teens and provides small grants to facilitate the implementation of youth designed projects. TCR grants pay for those costs that are essential to a project's success, such as equipment, transportation, food, and so on. TCR staff are available to meet with teen groups who need help organizing their ideas for change into concrete workable projects. Staff provide direct technical assistance and support to groups before, during, and after a grant is made.

Direct Advocacy and Organizing around Issues that Affect Youth

TCR involves its teen staff in efforts to ensure that young people are included in decision-making processes that affect teens in the city. In part this means educating large institutions such as the schools, private and public funding communities, the police department, and the courts about ways these groups might learn from teens and concretely involve teens in informing and influencing policy development. Examples include the following:

- TCR teens organizing for change at the Youth Service America Conference in Washington, D.C. to make sure teens have a greater voice in planning the conference next year
- Organizing a conference on teen parenting and sexuality to inform their peers about these issues
- Helping to organize a city-wide teen newspaper
- Helping to organize a City Council Hearing on cutbacks to youth services

Incubating New Programs

Because TCR is a city-wide agency, it has the opportunity to hear about a number of needs on the part of teens and about gaps in services for teens. TCR has responded to these gaps by taking the initiative to convene people and resources around specific ideas for filling the gaps with the development of new youth programs. TCR does not expect to run these programs, but rather to organize initial activity and interest in getting the programs going and then to spin the programs off, if they take hold, as separate organizations.

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Is the TCR model suitable for the needs of your community?

An organization that involves youth at different levels in providing services to youth is one that is appropriate in any setting, but the particular projects carried out would vary depending upon the needs of the community and the capacity and interests of the organization. There are some basic characteristics of a community that point to the need for a model such as the one described in this manual. While the factors listed below are inherent to urban communities, many will apply to smaller suburban communities as well.

- Large teen population
- Evidence of disaffection, disinvestment, alienation, and disempowerment among segments of the youth population, which can manifest in many ways: gangs, drug dealing and using, suicide, runaways, unemployment, dropping out of school, teens having kids
- Lack of innovation and openness on the part of adults in the way they view the contributing roles teens can play in society
- Large institutions that are making decisions about young people, "for" young people — decisions that will directly affect teens — but that have no process for involving teens in decision-making
- Need for a sympathetic funding base that sees not only the importance of direct funding for youth services, but also the need for leadership training and the development of creative and varied outreach efforts to engage young people in changing their communities

The model described in this manual begins to address the needs implicit in the above characteristics.

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MODEL OF PEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Teens are valuable resources that are rarely tapped into; they have a lot of skills and talents and ideas; they just need the opportunity to build leadership skills. A lot of the time youth service agencies serve youth as recipients or consumers, and that doesn't have to be the only role that teens play. They can be active participants in solving some of the issues that are out there in their communities. They need the opportunity to be able to act on their ideas. That's what we're trying to provide. (TCR staff member)

The next three sections provide a step by step description of the pilot year of teen staffing at TCR, including the intended design, what actually happened, the lessons learned, and the experience of the teens during the year. How the teens on staff were trained and prepared for their various responsibilities is as important as the actual activities they undertook. Both are described here in sufficient detail to enable you to take the pieces you find helpful and apply them to your own setting. This model is still in process (see Epilogue). What is described here is what occurred in the piloting of an innovative concept, and what was learned in the process. The development of the TCR peer leadership program applied the Teen Empowerment training model in order to expand the context in which teen leadership and responsibility could be demonstrated.

The description of the program areas and methodology of the peer leadership program is divided into three areas. They are as follows:

1) Hiring and Training of teen staff

2) Events and Ongoing Projects

3) Grants Process

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How the teens on staff were trained and prepared for their various responsibilities is as important as the actual activities they undertook. They need the opportunity to be able to act on their ideas. That's what we're trying to provide.

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HIRING AND TRAINING

Hiring — The Selection Process

Background

Before teens were hired onto the staff, there were already several teens serving as members of the Board of Directors. The teen Board members found themselves involved in many aspects of TCR, from revamping the grants process, to evaluating grant applications, to publishing a newsletter. It became apparent before long that these tasks were more than they could handle as volunteers. Given the agenda to increase teen involvement and leadership at all levels of the organization, the Board and Director decided to hire teens onto the staff at TCR.

Diversity among the teen staff was seen as essential to TCR's ability to reach out to programs and groups across the spectrum of Boston's population. The selection process, therefore, had to be far-reaching and inclusive, and had to show the ability of each applicant to work with others from different backgrounds.

Teen Empowerment's experience with hiring peer leaders showed clearly that many teens who lack the skill of performing well in traditional job interviews or have not been successful in school, possess the skills required for a teen leadership job. TCR chose to adapt a model developed by Teen Empowerment for the hiring process.

Recruiting Applicants

In order to expose as many teens as possible to the job opportunities at TCR, over 200 copies of the job description and an accompanying flyer were mailed to youth agencies, high schools, middle schools, and city agencies in Boston. Sixty teens responded to the flyer. TCR obtained information (including neighborhood, age, school, and grade) from the applicants as they called in, and told them they would be scheduled for interviews when the application period was over. Staff drew up an interview schedule that placed the applicants into groups of eight. Using the information obtained over the telephone, staff designed groups that exemplified, as much as possible, the diversity of age, gender, neighborhood, and ethnicity that they were seeking.

If I were to describe this position to someone who just needed a job, I don't know if I would be talking to them if they weren't interested in putting extra time in. If it was someone who was really interested in organizing and getting some leadership skills and meeting new people, I'd tell them all that. (TCR peer leader)

Every teen who called was scheduled for an interview. In addition to the staff's desire to interview widely, they believed that the interviews themselves provided a service to teens. For young people just getting started in the job market, having the experience of a job interview is helpful in itself.

Interviews: First Round

Interviews were conducted by Tim Cross, Director of TCR, and Stanley Pollack, Director of Teen Empowerment, Inc. For each day of interviewing, two groups were scheduled. The format included group interviews, written applications, and individual interviews. One half hour was allotted for the group interview and five minutes for each individual interview.

Interviewing both in a group and individually provided the interviewers with a rounded picture of each applicant, since some applicants do well in one setting but not the other. The written application provided another view; it allowed those who express themselves well on paper to give their thoughts and feelings in a way that they may not have been able to communicate orally.

Group Interview #1

The job of TCR teen staff involves meeting and working with groups of teens. From the group interview, judgements could be made about the applicants' willingness to learn and participate in group exercises and their ability to relate well within a group. It was more valuable to see if a teen could model positive behavior in a group of his or her peers than simply to hear the person stating that he or she could be a positive force in a group. The group format helped the applicants relax and feel confident, as well as providing the opportunity to interview many teens in a short period of time. (See Appendix, p.53 for the group interview format).

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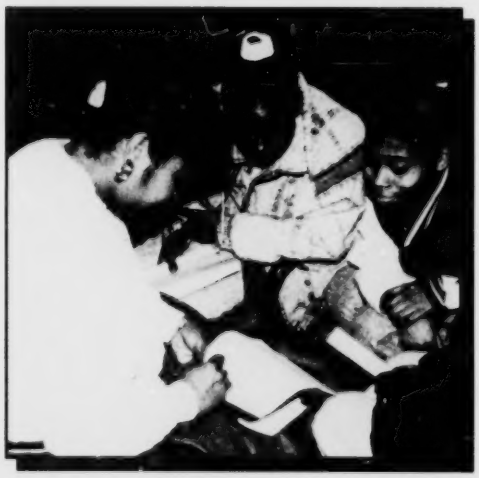

Written Applications and Individual Interviews

Each applicant was asked to fill out an application form. As applicants finished the written applications, they were asked to come one at a time for five-minute interviews. (See Appendix, p.53 for application and interview questions).

With so many applicants, it would be impossible to remember each one without documentation. Therefore, comprehensive notes were taken about each person during and immediately following the interview, and a snapshot was taken of each applicant.

Before the end of the interview, the interviewers explained how the hiring process was being conducted and the criteria for choosing the group to be hired. Care was taken to explain the total number being interviewed and the competition for limited positions. TCR's need for diversity in the group was also discussed. Each person was told that if he or she was not chosen for a second interview, this was not necessarily a reflection on their leadership skills or their performance in the interview.

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Staff were looking for evidence of strong commitment, public speaking skills, leadership qualities, and facilitating/mediating qualities.

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Interviews: Second Round

Fifteen of those interviewed in the first round were asked to come back for second interviews. This round consisted of a group interview, with seven or eight applicants in each group, and individual interviews of about five minutes duration. (See Appendix, p.54 for formats of both). At this point, staff were looking for evidence of strong commitment, public speaking skills, leadership qualities, and facilitating/mediating qualities.

The Results

From the group who went through the second round of interviews, TCR offered jobs to four teens; two slots remained unfilled. The group hired consisted of three African-Americans and one Southeast Asian, three boys and one girl; it lacked a Hispanic teen and a white teen, and it needed balance by gender.

To fill the remaining slots, two girls, one Hispanic and one white, were recruited from other youth programs in Boston. The youth referred came highly recommended, and were already known to TCR. Relatively soon, one of the African-American boys left, leaving a space which was filled by an African-American girl. This left two boys in the group of six: one Vietnamese and one African-American.

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Diversity among the teen staff was seen as essential to TCR's ability to reach out to programs and groups across the spectrum...the selection process, therefore, had to be far-reaching and inclusive.

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Training for Teen Staff

TCR staff were trained using five of Teen Empowerment's six TeenPower™ training modules, modified and adapted for TCR. They were designed to be used on an ongoing basis throughout the teens' employment, with continuous reinforcement from experiences on the job. All of the TeenPower™ training sessions have these characteristics:

- They are interactive, with as little lecturing as possible.
- They begin with an explanation of the purpose of the session and the agenda.
- They include name games and warm-up exercises.
- They end with an evaluation of the meeting by participants.
- They tend to use the following techniques:
  - -brainstorming
  - -working in small groups
  - -working in pairs

The six TeenPower modules are grouped into three areas, as follows:

- ***Motivation*** — The Program Purpose workshop
- ***Behavior Management*** — Provides training in Contracting and in Group Feedback and Communications.
- ***Skills*** — Encompasses training in Group Meeting/Group Development, Event Planning, and Conflict Prevention and Intervention. (As the events being planned were not at high risk for conflict, the teens were not trained in Conflict Prevention and Intervention.)

Motivation Training: Program Purpose

To be successful, it was necessary that the teen staff understand the goals of their work and be invested in meeting those goals. A workshop on Program Purpose was designed to help the staff remain in touch with the problems they are working to ameliorate, and understand their goals clearly before embarking on an activity. The problem-solving process taught in this workshop had broad application in both the work and the personal lives of the teens involved.

In the Program Purpose training session, the teen staff brainstormed and rated in order of seeming importance the problems that confront teens in Boston. They discussed objectives and strategies for having some impact, as well as how to measure success. (See Appendix, p.55 for instructions for this module.)

When I came to TCR and after going through a lot of things here, one thing that finally hit me was that if you're going to get involved in things, have goals and a strategy to achieve those goals. Before that, I had been setting abstract goals I knew I couldn't reach. Like my goal before TCR was that I wanted to be happy. Very general. That's everybody's goal. Happiness means a lot of things now. In a sense it means being able to do what you want to do when you want to do it. It doesn't mean that you have to have a lot of money in your pocket, because you can get a good feeling from so many different things. Like just helping people. And you don't have to help them in huge capacities. You can help them in the smallest way and they appreciate it so much. (TCR peer leader)

Behavior Management: Contracting

In this module, the teen staff participated in the development of a work contract that clearly specified what behavior was unacceptable and what the penalties were for each type of behavior. The penalties were structured so that the teens could learn from their mistakes. (See Appendix, p.55 for a description of the Contracting workshop.)

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The penalties were structured so that the teens could learn from their mistakes. Since constructive criticism is conveyed in an atmosphere of acceptance and love, these sessions can be particularly valuable for high-risk youth.

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At first I didn't see a need for (the contracting), but it did make some sort of rules to go by. No one likes to feel we need rules to live by, but we did. It wasn't like a definite need, but there were some concerns. Like, what time is late? (TCR peer leader)

Behavior Management: Group Feedback and Communication

In the TeenPower Feedback Skills workshop, staff members learned how to communicate with co-workers in a supportive way about their strengths and weaknesses. They learned how to receive such communication and use it to improve their own work.

Feedback sessions create strong bonds in groups. Since constructive criticism is conveyed in an atmosphere of acceptance and love, these sessions can be particularly valuable for high-risk youth. Two feedback sessions were held with teen staff during the pilot year at TCR. (For further information on these sessions, see Appendix, p.56.)

It would be good to have more feedback sessions. We only had a couple of them. When we had them, they were great. The second one we had, everybody dreaded it because they felt there was a lot of tension in the air and unresolved conflicts, and people felt that they would be attacked by everybody. But every time we have

those feedback sessions it is so good. You're forced to deal with the person one on one and tell them how you feel — the good and the bad things. It's like a release. (TCR staff)

Before I started working at TCR, I could have been characterized as a very sarcastic person, always looking at the bad things and harping on them. But I tried to harp on them in funny ways. I thought it was helping the person. Now I realize that that kind of criticism doesn't help much. It's more of the positive criticism that gets people's esteem going and helps people to change. (TCR peer leader)

Skills Training: Group Meeting/Group Development

TCR teen staff were called upon regularly to run meetings. As part of the grants process, they conducted technical assistance workshops for organizations that wanted help in developing projects and filling out the application, and they conducted meetings during each site visit. They also required group meeting and group development skills in order to run events successfully.

The Teen Empowerment Group Meeting/Group Development training module addresses this need in a number of ways. The most concrete is in providing a simple, adaptable format for use in planning all kinds of meetings. This format, which is modeled in all the training sessions, is included in the Appendix, p.56.

During the whole training process, Tim and Stan emphasized that we would be doing this some day. That we'd be running meetings and trainings ourselves with other groups. We had a lot of support. They encouraged us the whole way. We got encouragement from each other as well. (TCR peer leader)

Skills Training: Event Planning

Many of the applicants for TCR funds requested money to put on events. TCR's teen staff, therefore, were in the position of judging the ability of other teen groups to organize and run activities. One way for staff to acquire the experience to make these judgements was to plan and run an event themselves. In addition, the work and the pressure of staging an event provided invaluable opportunities for the teens to get to know each other and to bond as a group. For these reasons, and also because TCR sponsored and cosponsored events on a fairly regular basis, the teen staff were trained in Event Planning Skills, using the TeenPower training modules. In this module, the group considered its goals, chose a project, and worked with a four-phase planning process to bring the project to reality.

In a series of meetings, the TCR teen staff struggled with what event to do. They considered doing an event in conjunction with another group, but ultimately rejected this idea. Finally, they decided to sponsor a rally in opposition to a drastic tax-cutting referendum that would face Massachusetts voters in the November election.

Following the precept that the group should always know clearly what its goals are, one training session was devoted entirely to setting goals. Goals for the rally were brainstormed and established. This session was used also to set goals for the grants process, a teen newspaper project that TCR was sponsoring, and a conference on teen sexuality.

Once the goals were set, the group began working with other elements of the training module to make the event happen. They brainstormed all the tasks, then checked to see if the tasks were sufficient to meet the goals. They assigned responsibility and deadlines for each task, made a timeline, and checked regularly on the status of each piece of work. These techniques for planning and implementing events were used in each of the events the teen staff worked on throughout the year. Specific events and projects are described in the next section.

We developed the ideas behind the rally. We did outreach work on that. At the conference, we were the ones who decided on the issues. We decided about the workshops and the times we're going to have them, the format we're going to use. If we needed a training session, we decided on the speakers, food, facilitators, all of it. We were really in control of the whole process. (TCR peer leader)

EVENTS AND ONGOING PROJECTS

The events and projects, outside of the grantmaking process, that were undertaken during the year are described in this section. The events constitute short-term efforts, where TCR was playing an initiating or organizing role with time-limited involvement. The activities and projects, on the other hand, are part of the ongoing work of TCR.

Events:

- CLT Rally
- Newspaper
- Conference
- City Council Hearing

Ongoing Activities and Annual Projects:

- Newsletter
- Enrichment Program
- Tribute to Teens

The experience of planning and organizing projects and events led to the development of new skills as well as new perspectives for the peer leaders. These projects gave the teens a context from which to judge others' work within the grantmaking process. Through the experience of planning and implementing their own projects, they could tell if others were being realistic and well organized, in reference to their own efforts. Having been responsible for their own organizing projects, they had also experienced the process of empowerment first hand. Hence their evaluation of the projects was grounded in direct experience of what it takes to organize a successful project, as well as the perspective of empowerment.

For many of the peer leaders, their first hand experience and understanding of empowerment generalized not only to the grants process, but to other areas of their lives as well.

There's a lot of things you can take from TCR — dealing with people, seeing how an agency is run, going outside doing technical assistance work, going out and meeting new people and standing up in front of them and telling them what they can do to make their agency better. Whatever you end up doing, you can use these skills. (TCR peer leader)

In my English class, we were doing a magazine for school. And since I'm involved in the newspaper here, I said let us do that. I find myself in class saying, "This is our paper. What do we want in it?" They say science. I say, "You don't want science, you want fashion, you want style, you want articles that will make you think." Now they're offering more input, whereas when we first started out, the teacher was doing everything. She said this was our magazine, the kids' magazine, but all we would do was write the stories and give it to her. Then she would do the rest. But I thought we could do it on our own. The teacher told me she couldn't believe the change in some of the kids. Like kids who would normally be getting F's are really into it. When kids feel responsible for something, they want it to turn out right. (TCR peer leader)

The CLT Rally - October, 1990

The first event undertaken by the TCR teen staff was a rally in opposition to a referendum sponsored by Citizens for Limited Taxation. Had the ballot question passed, the resulting cuts would have disproportionately affected teens and the services and schools they utilize. TCR wanted to create a forum where teens could both learn about and let the general voting public know about their sentiments on this question.

A clear goal established for the rally was to have youth in positions of responsibility. For the rally to be truly successful, youth needed to be involved at every level — running meetings, designing flyers, distributing flyers, talking to the media, making speeches, reaching out to other youth and bringing them into the process, and assuming every position of responsibility and power (See Appendix, p.58 for Event planning.) The rally provided a concrete organizing focus for the TCR peer leaders. It was their first opportunity to apply the skills they were learning in the training context.

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A clear goal established for the rally was to have youth in positions of responsibility. For the rally to be truly successful, youth needed to be involved at every level.

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Well, I started off going to every meeting and before I knew it I was running my mouth, and then I found myself finding all the speakers and then I found myself being the emcee, and I thought how did this happen? It was different because I had never done it before. It went really well. I felt good about it. (TCR peer leader)

When the TCR teen staff took on the rally as their major project, planning meetings had already been held by adult organizers from an organization called Citizens for Safety, who were cosponsoring the rally with TCR. Some youth had come to meetings, but the power was clearly in adult hands. This changed at a

meeting held shortly after the TCR teens became involved. The meeting was run by the teens using TeenPower training techniques. Participants were paired off to discuss the event, and the youth present were finally able to voice their questions, as many did not understand the issues clearly at that point. Teens now understood the purpose of the event, saw youth leadership modeled by the TCR teens, and knew that they would be empowered in their work on the rally. They became invested in making it work.

The rally took place in a public location across from CLT headquarters. The event was a success, with approximately 400 youth attending. Teens emceed, and speeches were made by fifteen teens, including those who would be affected by CLT cuts. Teens were interviewed by the media, and one TCR teen was asked to do a follow-up television editorial on her ideas about the referendum. The speeches were followed by teen entertainment and acts.

The rally was our trial at facilitating meetings. That was a major goal, organizing the rally. Secondly, I saw it as enriching other youth and helping them get involved, actually showing them on a level they could understand instead of using all the jargon and mumbo-jumbo that tends to get involved in politics, talking

to them about things that are going to happen to them or around them. That's what I saw my role as. The immediate impact I got was that people my age would listen to me, whereas they probably wouldn't listen to an adult. I got people involved that wouldn't have gotten involved. In turn, they got their friends involved. (TCR peer leader)

Teen Newspaper Organizing Meeting

Boston's first city-wide teen newspaper, *United Youth of Boston*, began to be organized in September, 1990, based on a conversation between a freelance reporter, Jim Hight, and the Director of TCR. The project was to fill a much talked about need among teens: that the mainstream media rarely, if ever, print their views on a range of issues affecting teens. The media tend to report the negative activities of a small minority of teens, and fail to report on the positive activities.

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Teens from all over Boston talked about what types of support they need. Conference participants shared painful stories...Adults learned about ways in which their agencies can be more responsive to the needs of teens and teen parents.

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TCR took the lead in convening a series of planning meetings to develop the idea of starting a city-wide youth newspaper, with TCR peer leaders helping to run the meetings. Included were community people, youth service workers, and teens. The initial planning group organized a city-wide meeting of teens to test the idea of the newspaper and to engage a much larger number of teens in determining the paper's format and content. The meeting was attended by 80 teens, who worked in small groups to approve the ideas, decide on a name, and work on ideas for initial articles. A committed organizing committee was formed of teens ready to work as volunteers on publishing the first issue. In the meantime, a concept paper was sent out to funders for start-up funding.

There are now 12 paid teens on staff working as editors. The first 24 page edition of the paper was printed in April, 1991. The paper is currently being printed on a bimonthly basis. In the future, it is hoped that the paper will be published on a bi-weekly basis.

The "Realizing the Dream" Conference

In January, 300 adults and teens came together for the "Realizing the Dream" conference on teen sexuality and parenting held at MIT. There were 20 different workshops led by adults and youth on issues such as birth control, living with AIDS, sexual abuse, teen parents' legal rights, childcare, and self-esteem.

Teens from all over Boston talked about what it was like to be young fathers and mothers and the types of support they need. Conference participants shared

painful stories of sexual abuse, gave condom demonstrations, and talked about the challenge of being gay. Adults learned about ways in which their agencies can be more responsive to the needs of teens and teen parents.

In addition to workshops, the conference included door prizes, free food, entertainment by local youth groups, skits on sexuality performed by teens, and a D.J. to celebrate the adult-youth alliance. The peer leaders, recognizing that these activities were critical marketing tools for getting teens to attend the event, had organized them accordingly.

The organization of the conference took several months, working in conjunction with three other organizations. The TCR teen staff researched and recruited community and youth leaders to run the workshops, and provided a training session for the workshop leaders.

If I hadn't gone through this whole shebang here at TCR, I would not have had the courage to say I'd run that workshop. I felt confident and secure in the position that I was in to do that. Then, once the conference began, many times I got called on in different capacities, and a lot of times my first reaction was to say I couldn't do that, but then I knew that I could, because I had done it before already at TCR, so I couldn't say no. I like feeling like I'm helping people out. (TCR peer leader)

City Council Hearing on Peer Leader Jobs

TCR's teen staff were involved in an effort to organize youth for a hearing before the Boston City Council regarding the elimination of peer leader jobs from the City of Boston's Youth Outreach Program (YOP). TCR and Citizens for Safety cosponsored the event.

The TCR teens organized recruitment for the hearing among teens who had been involved with the YOP. They wrote speeches and ran training sessions for other teens who wanted to speak. Teen Empowerment, Inc. provided support for the teens in their efforts: working on speech training, putting together tips for speakers, and compiling a fact sheet about the peer leader program and the proposed cut.

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Approximately 150 people came to the hearing. Teen after teen spoke about the positive influence the peer leader program had had on their lives.

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Approximately 150 people came to the hearing. Teen after teen spoke about the positive influence the peer leader program had had on their lives. All but one of the TCR teens spoke. One TCR teen wrote an article that was published on the op ed page of the *Boston Globe*. Largely due to this organizing effort, funding for the peer leader program was continued.

One thing that's different between TCR and some other youth programs is that

they are run by the city and the mayor. TCR isn't. I think you can have more political clout at TCR because you don't have to be tied to one idea. Having it be private is easier. It gives more leeway to do what you want to do. And it's given me a different perspective on city politics because I don't have to do it just one way. (TCR peer leader)

The TCR Newsletter

The "Teens Up Front" Newsletter is a quarterly publication, put out by TCR to inform and update funders, supporters, community members and teens about the work in which TCR is involved. It publicizes the goals, thinking and positive activities of youth city-wide. It is distributed to schools, youth groups, human service agencies, neighborhood associations, corporations, foundations and legislators. The newsletter is written and edited by the teen staff at TCR, with the Program Director coordinating the process and approving each stage. The Spring 1991 newsletter was put together in two months, with boxes of the newsletter arriving in May for distribution.

Enrichment Program

The Enrichment Program brings together the TCR peer leaders and the JFK Library Corps team leaders (another group of peer leaders in Boston) for enriching activities once every two or three months. The purposes of the enrichment program are to:

- Give the TCR peer leaders a larger context for understanding their organizing work in the community. Through field trips, guest speakers, presentations, and discussions, the teens learn about socio-political issues that affect teens on the local, national and international levels.

- Bring the two groups of youth leaders together to share and learn about the work of each group.

- Give the TCR peer leaders a chance to socialize with each other outside of work and take a break from their work in the city.

The enrichments are organized by one teen representative and the Program Director from TCR and JFK, so that little planning work is required. They are informal and fluid, with a special dinner always included as part of the event.

The enrichment activities were consistently a success, appreciated by all who were involved. The only concern was that there was not enough time devoted to this sort of activity. (See Appendix, p.58, for descriptions of the enrichment activities organized during the pilot year.)

Tribute to Teens

The first annual Tribute to Teens was held in November, 1989, prior to teens coming onto the staff of TCR. The purpose of this event was to honor the teens participating in TCR sponsored projects. It brought together 43 TCR sponsored projects for an evening of awards, dinner and entertainment. The planning for the Tribute began in June. The organizing committee for the event was drawn from groups who had received TCR support and were to be honored at the Tribute. Approximately 30 teens came to the first meeting and remained involved in the planning. In addition to planning the actual event, the process gave TCR staff the chance to educate a number of teens about TCR, including its mission and purpose.

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At the 2nd annual Tribute to Teens everyone was honored; the event was a success, with attendance by about 500 teens.

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Approximately 350 teens attended, and the goals of bringing together programs from

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throughout the city and honoring the teens involved were achieved. Teens wrote speeches which they delivered at the event, thus making TCR's new direction towards teen leadership highly visible.

The second Tribute to Teens occurred on May 19, 1991. The organizing of this event provided a good measure of how far TCR had come in terms of teen involvement. The organizational work took place in four meetings, which were led by the teen staff. The teens who came from other community organizations to work on the event were well aware of TCR's identity.

Many teens volunteered to give speeches at the event. All of the speakers at the event were teens, including all of the teen staff, plus seven other teens. Those who spoke attended training sessions and received adult assistance as needed with writing and practicing their speeches. Public speaking provided a clear developmental leap for many of those participating; their increased self-confidence was evident to those who worked with them. The event was a success, with attendance by about 500 teens.

GRANTS PROCESS

Introduction

General Overview

The grants process is the core activity of the TCR model. Small grants are awarded to groups of teenagers throughout the city for projects they wish to organize within their communities. The criteria for funding include a requirement that the projects be teen driven — both initiated and carried out by teens. (See Appendix, p.59 for Examples of funded programs).

TCR's teen staff work directly with teen groups to help them plan their projects, elicit and evaluate proposals from teens in the community, and make recommendations for funding. Hence, in the grants process the goal of empowering teens is operating at two levels: skill and identity development of TCR peer leaders as well as of the grantees in the community. The model of teens evaluating and providing technical assistance to other teens is a powerful means of empowering everyone involved, in terms of both skill development and modeling. As two of the peer leaders at TCR put it:

I feel that we have a tremendous amount of power. It's sort of like we're on the same level as an adult would be, but we're teens. I don't even look at us as peer leaders. When I see other peer leaders, they just follow the lead of an adult, whereas we make our own path and set our own goals. I look at us as miniature adults, not like peer leaders.... Now that I'm here I know about leadership, and I know the different ways peers can be. So I find myself in school saying, Hey, why don't we do that? They're like amazed at how I take leadership. And that's just happened as a result of working here. I know a lot more. Everywhere I go and everything I work on I'm always trying to get the teens to run the show instead of an adult. I'm trying to get the teens involved a lot more in the planning, decision making and the groundwork.

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I feel that we have a tremendous amount of power. It's sort of like we're on the same level as an adult would be, but we're teens. I don't even look at us as peer leaders.

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We've all done different organizing things, so we all know the feeling of empowerment. One of our goals at TCR is to help other people feel empowered. It's like taking it one step further.

Stages of Grants Process

The TCR grants process consists of the following steps:

Step 1 - Developing and distributing applications
Step 2 - Pre-application technical assistance workshops
Step 3 - Site visits
Step 4 - Writing assessments of sites / Generating recommendations
Step 5 - Grants Committee meetings
Step 6 - Full Board meeting
Step 7 - Grantees notified / Award ceremony
Step 8 - Follow-up technical assistance for grantees

The funding cycle occurs twice a year. In the first cycle of the pilot year, the schedule was:

Sept. 26 - Oct. 14 Develop guidelines and applications
Oct. 15 - Mail guidelines and applications
Oct. 22 - Nov. 15 Provide pre-application technical assistance workshops to applicants who request it
Dec.1 - Deadline for applications. Divide proposals and form teams.
Dec. 2-20 Schedule and carry out site visits to applicants
Dec. 27-Jan 11 Write assessments of each site's proposal
Jan. 24 - Mail packets with information about applicants and proposed projects, along with recommendations for funding, to Grants Committee and Board
Jan 31 - Grants Committee meeting #1
Feb. 11 - Grants Committee meeting #2
Feb. 14 - Full Board meeting
March 1 - Award Ceremony

Orientation: Defining Roles and Criteria

Before embarking on the grants process, clarification of roles was critical since there were now teens both on the staff and on the Board. Teen staff and teen Board members met with adult staff in an orientation workshop designed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the staff and Board relative to the grants process, and to establish the criteria for funding TCR grants. One of the objectives of the workshop was to create a timeline for the grants process, identifying the points where power switches from staff to Board, for example where the Board is asked to review the staff's recommendations for funding. (See Appendix for the agenda for this workshop and the definitions of roles that were generated.)

Preparation / Training

For each stage of the grants process, the peer leaders participated in training sessions to prepare them for the task at hand. These preparation / training sessions were critical to skill-building and leadership training, as well as to ensuring that the grants process was successful.

A general meeting format designed to prepare the peer leaders for upcoming meetings or activities was used throughout the grants process. The agenda would differ slightly depending on what was being prepared for. For example, preparation for a site visit would differ somewhat from preparation for a Grants Committee meeting, as both audiences and content are different. The format included identifying the goals of the upcoming meeting, reviewing an agenda proposed by the adult staff, and deciding on a final format for the meeting. This was followed by a second preparation session in which the teen staff decided who would assume responsibility for which roles in the upcoming meeting or activity. Each person then went through a full roleplay of his/her part, receiving constructive feedback and support from the group. (See Appendix, p.61, for detailed agendas of these sessions).

The most significant variation in this format related directly to the increasing confidence and skills of the teen staff. After a time they were able to create the meeting structure themselves. For example, the workshop leader was able to say, "Given that these are the goals we have identified, how would you design and run a meeting to accomplish those goals?" Hence, as they became more experienced, the teen staff assumed responsibility for more parts of the process.

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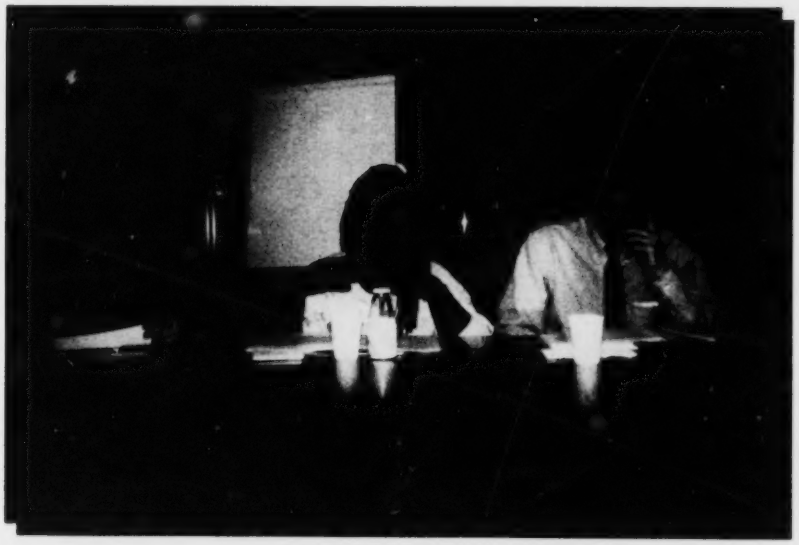

Specific Steps

Step 1: Developing and Distributing Applications

The application for funding was designed by TCR adult and teen staff to find out what the applicant's project was, why it was being initiated, and who was involved. TCR was especially interested in discovering to what extent teens would be involved in the proposed project. Therefore, TCR suggested that teens working on the project fill out the application. This was not an absolute requirement, and in many cases teens and adults worked on the application together.

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What we did was go out to groups that had ideas or said that they wanted to help their neighborhood. We helped them develop the ideas into an actual project. Those were pretty interesting.

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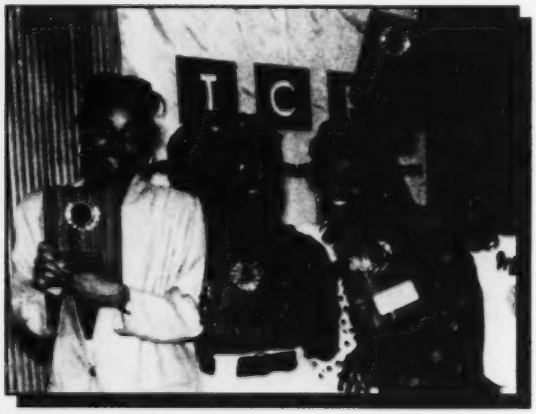
The application was designed to be relatively easy to fill out: to ask for the necessary information and no more. Applicants filled out sections describing the organization, the proposed project, and the budget for the project. The full application form is shown in the Appendix, p.63.

Our teen staff do the majority of work around the grants process. They've written the brochure and the application, so that it's appealing to other youth and they can understand what we're talking about. This is important since the youth themselves are the ones who fill out the applications. (TCR staff)

Step 2: Pre-application Technical Assistance Workshops

Several organizations requested and were offered technical assistance in filling out the application. These agencies participated in Technical Assistance Workshops conducted by TCR teen staff, which helped each organization develop a plan and a process of implementation for its project. For example, the Boston Area Health Education Center participated in two workshops. The first helped them develop ideas for a project, and the second focused on filling out the TCR application. Each workshop lasted for approximately one and a half hours (See Appendix, p.64, for workshop format.) Different peer leaders took responsibility for facilitating different parts of the workshops. Several of the peer leaders describe their experiences:



What we did was go out to groups that had ideas or said that they wanted to help their neighborhood. We helped them develop the ideas into an actual project. Those were pretty interesting. It was a major part in setting the criteria for the grants process. Without those initial site visits, the actual grants process would have suffered a lot, if we hadn't had the opportunity to see how the groups actually worked and make assessments on different areas about projects. Those visits provided the criteria and gave us the opportunity to assess the ideas. It made it really concrete in terms of the actual issues.

That first meeting was so scary. I never ran a meeting before. I was working with teens and maybe doing counseling and all that, but it was always together; I never ran a meeting before. Everybody had something to do on the agenda, like the warm-up, introductions and all that. I was scared because I thought people weren't going to listen to me. But they did.

I was scared. I wasn't used to it, but I ran the meeting...I do not speak English fluently...and I have to memorize...I have to remember. But later when I went to the other meetings I felt more comfortable.

Although these workshops were helpful, it was generally agreed that more time was needed to provide enough assistance for these groups to initiate successful projects. As one of the teen staff said:

I don't think we reached our goal, really. Because our goal was to help them plan a project, write a proposal and get it funded. We did the first two, but I don't think any of the things in the project that were submitted that we helped them with got funded. They needed a lot more time. But we got them excited about it, and we got them to focus on one project.

Two out of three of the sites requesting technical assistance received grants at a later funding cycle, after they had a chance to develop their project ideas.

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Everybody had something to do on the agenda, like the warm-up, introductions and all that. I was scared because I thought people weren't going to listen to me. But they did.

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Step 3: Site Visits

Every organization that applied for funding was visited by TCR staff. These visits were crucial to the success of the grants process. The six teen staff were divided into three teams of two each. The teams were formed and assigned by the adult staff with an eye to having a 'strong' peer leader in each group. 'Strong' was tacitly defined as being verbal and comfortable with public speaking, well organized, and responsible regarding follow through. The two adult staff (Director and Program Director) soloed, constituting two more teams.

It was good working in a team. It was more fun. We divided ourselves up into which one would do the talking and which one would do the writing. Sometimes we both did the talking. If I had to do it by myself, I might have been intimidated. And you wouldn't have anyone to help you. (TCR peer leader)

Note: Although the peer leaders liked working in teams, they were not happy with how the teams were formed during the first round of the grants process. They felt that certain people were perceived as not being able to handle the process on their own, which they felt was unfair, and they wanted to have more choice in forming teams. Whether or not team formation should be controlled by teen or adult staff is a debatable point, but either way it is important to be aware of the control / power / leadership issues which predictably will come up in this and similar situations, and to acknowledge and address them openly. It is just one example of the ongoing negotiation over how much control should be given to the teen staff, a process which was experienced as healthy and necessary.

The 36 proposals received were divided randomly among the teams, with each team receiving 7 or 8. Each team was asked to read over their proposals and then come back to the large group prepared to present a summary of each proposal. Two peer leaders created a large chart listing the project name, the contact person, phone number, and amount requested. In addition, there were two blank columns for the names of the staff assigned to the project, and the date, time, and place scheduled for the visit.

Each team then presented its proposals to the group, with an initial list of questions or concerns they would raise, given the TCR criteria. The Director invited the group to raise additional questions, and then offered his own questions.

In some cases the teens had some connection with the groups requesting funding, constituting a conflict of interest. The Director or Program Director assumed responsibility for reviewing those proposals. They also took on the proposals which appeared the weakest. As each proposal was assigned, the team responsible was written on the chart. Team members then went directly to the telephones to schedule site visits, returning to write in the dates and times. These charts remained on the wall throughout the grants cycle.

Doing the site visits was important for getting the information we needed to make a decision. Just reading the proposal gave you an idea of what the group was like and how the group worked. There were some places where it looked like a lot of teens had written the proposal and they really hadn't, or teens just put their name on it but weren't really into the project. And there were some places where it looked like they didn't have any teens, but they actually had a lot. Going out and having that first-hand contact was important. You got to meet people and see how they worked together. And how they organized themselves. (TCR peer leader)

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When I think of peer leadership, I think of equality, that we can work together. We're helping other people be leaders.

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A meeting format was developed for the site visits in one of the preparation sessions with TCR staff (See Appendix, p.65). One goal of the format was to reveal clearly the extent of teen involvement in the project. The meeting format was optional. Some staff members chose to use it; others did not. In some cases this was problematic as the meetings were not always as productive as they might have been. In most cases, however, the site visits went well, and the TCR staff were able to find out the information they needed as well as develop a positive relationship with the group in question:

I think that makes an incredible difference when you have a teenager going out and meeting with their peers; it's not nearly as intimidating, they can kind of talk to each other so that they understand what's going on.

It's so much easier for youth to talk to us, even though they're still nervous. I think this is good. When I think of peer leadership, I think of equality, that we can work together. We're helping other people be leaders. In terms of decision-making and peer leadership, if we can get them to be comfortable with us and treat us as equals, in turn we can teach them some skills of being leaders. It's cool.

For the teens who participated in the site visits, having other teens come to evaluate their work and seeing these teens running a meeting and modeling leadership was a powerful step towards their own empowerment. The TCR teen staff were aware of this effect:

During all the site visits, the teenagers understood that we had some power. So the image we showed was of someone who had gotten somewhere. They looked at us as role models.

Note: It would have been helpful for an adult staff person to accompany each team of peer leaders on the first couple of site visits to give them feedback. However, this would have been difficult during the pilot year given the staff capacity. In addition, some of the staff felt that the inconsistent quality of the meetings was due in part to there being insufficient time for preparation.

I think we need to spend a little more time with the whole process. I think more training needs to be done prior to the site visits, because it's not always clear, when the peer leaders go out, what the purpose of the site visit is and what kind of information they need to bring back to the Grants Committee. We need to spend more time on the training — the part that's "Exactly what's the purpose of the site visit?" (TCR staff)

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Step 4: Writing Assessments of Sites

Following each site visit, team members filled out a Funding Request Evaluation form. The form asks for general information about the agency and the project, and for a recommendation that the project a) be funded, b) be considered for funding with specified concerns, or c) not be considered for specified reasons (See Appendix, p.65, for content of form).

The staff then summarized the information from the Funding Request Evaluation form for each site. The summary included: name of agency, background information, description of proposed project, requested and recommended amounts, teen responsibilities, rationale for funding recommendation, and a detailed budget of the project.

Teams met individually with the Director and then with the group to identify questions they still needed to get answered before doing their write-ups. After obtaining this additional information from the different sites, the teams moved on to the phase of recommending that certain proposals be cut.

Each site was placed in one of the following categories:

Category I: Proposals receive the staff's strongest recommendation for funding. In the staff's view, these proposals meet all of TCR's funding criteria.

Category II: Proposals recommended for funding. However, the release of the TCR grant is tied to the site's meeting certain specific conditions listed in the assessments.

Category III: Proposals recommended for postponement. In their current form, these proposals do not meet some major TCR funding criteria. However, the groups do have strong potential and with TCR's help and more time for development and organization, they could be eligible for funding later on.

Category IV: Proposals not recommended for funding. Applicants can reapply in April if they choose.

Being in a position of making recommendations about who was to be funded and who was not was an experience of power that the teens had not had before. The teen staff had different reactions to this new experience:

My personal confidence and self-esteem is kind of shaky because this is my first time (being in this role). Today, I kind of stepped back for a minute, and I saw

myself pointing..... I asked, "Don't we have any more money to give away?" I felt like such a Scrooge.

It was easy to say if a group or project was good. But the groups you didn't like, I knew I didn't think they should get the money, but it was hard because I thought, Well, are they really unqualified? That was the hardest part for me.

I felt like people respected me. It feels good when anybody respects you. It's almost as though being treated more respectfully, you begin to see yourself more that way and act more that way.

Step 5: Grants Committee Meetings

The Grants Committee is comprised of 7 adult and 4-5 teen Board members. The Committee met twice to assess proposals and make funding recommendations. Prior to the first meeting, the members of the Board had received a written report of the proposed projects and the staff's recommendations.

Meeting #1

At the first meeting, teen staff presented an overview of what the process had entailed up to that point, explaining their involvement, along with the materials they had developed as part of the process. The Board members were impressed and excited by the evident impact of having teens staffing the grants process. Apart from one brief warm-up exercise in pairs, most of the large group time consisted of the team members reporting to the members of the Committee.

The Committee then broke into three small groups, with each group led by the members of one of the site-visit teams. Staff members presented to the Committee members information about the sites they had visited, and their recommendation regarding each site. In these groups, the Committee members considered the recommendations, raised questions, and suggested changes in categorization or amounts recommended. (For small group agenda, see Appendix, p.67.)

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The Board members reported both enjoying and benefiting from the teens' reporting on the new process being used to review the grants. At the same time, the staff felt that the meetings could be even more interactive. This was taken into account in planning the second meeting.

Meeting #2

At the second meeting, the room was set up less formally (chairs with no tables) and the meeting began with two exercises that helped everyone relax and interact. The meeting was designed to foster interaction and allow everyone to be heard by doing most of the work in small groups.

In the large group, there was a discussion of what work the small groups should do. It was agreed that the small groups could only move applications from the recommended-for-funding categories (I and II) to not recommended, but not the other way around.

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The meeting ended with an evaluation: If this meeting were food, what kind would it be, and why? "Pizza, as that's my favorite food and I loved this meeting."

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Small groups were formed with approximately 4 people in each. Each small group was given a set of applications to consider. All the applications in Categories I and II totaled $40,000, but only $30,000 in grant money was available. The groups were asked to find $10,000 in cuts. Each group went through its list and marked those applications that needed discussion. Basically, the Grants Committee members found themselves in agreement with the recommendations of the teams. One application was cut from Category II and others were scaled back to make up the $10,000.

The meeting ended with an evaluation: If this meeting were food, what kind would it be, and why? "Chinese food, because there were so many things mixed together," "Pizza, as that's my favorite food and I loved this meeting." The meeting was productive and achieved its goals, while stimulating real interaction among teens and adults. Seventeen proposals were recommended for funding.

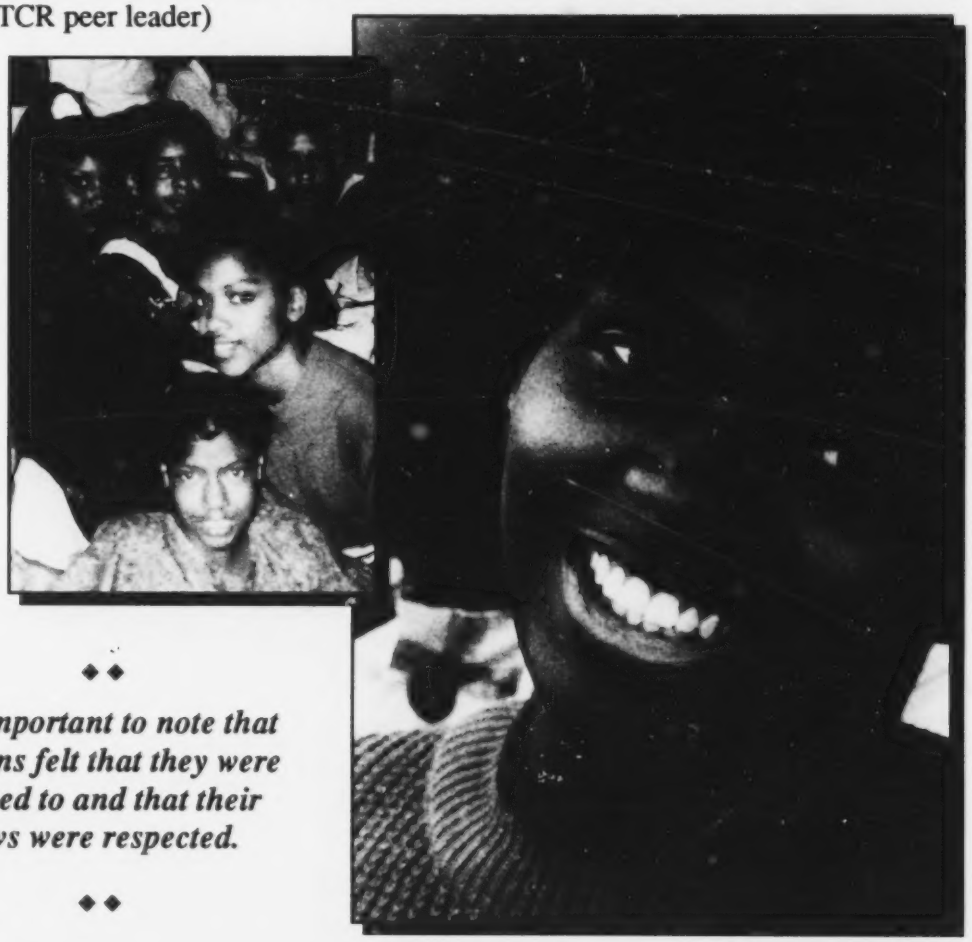
Step 6: Full Board Meeting

At the full Board Meeting, the teen staff again presented the steps of the grant process and the new materials they had developed over the course of the process. This led into the presentation of recommendations by the Grants Committee. Charts had been made indicating the site name, amount of funding requested by the site, amount recommended by the Grants Committee, and the final recommendation. The full Board then broke into groups to review and revise selected recommendations. After reconvening in the large group, the Board approved all of the recommendations of the Grants Committee.

The adult leadership requested a traditional format for this meeting, replacing a previously developed design. In part this was due to one of the agenda items being the review and approval of a newly developed strategic plan for the organization. Participation and interaction among teens and adults were noticeably low. This raises an important concern about structuring meetings (and preparing teens for meetings) in such a way as to facilitate communication between adults and teens, and foster teen participation and leadership as much as possible (For further discussion on this, see "Incorporating teen involvement on the Board of Directors", p.34).

However, despite the lack of interaction in this meeting, it is important to note that the teens felt that they were listened to and that their views were respected by the adult members of the Board and the Grants Committee.

Before the last Board meeting, I didn't know what sort of decision-making power we had in the grants process. I just knew we made recommendations to the Grants Committee, but I found that we really had a lot of power there. Things that I said, the Grants Committee really listened. They took my word and ideas as valid. (TCR peer leader)



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It is important to note that the teens felt that they were listened to and that their views were respected.

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Step 7: Grantees Notified / Award Ceremony

TCR adopted a policy of notifying grantees by letter only, not by phone. Grantees were notified by letter the day after the decisions were made. Proposals not receiving funding were notified by letter several days later. Given the informal communication network among teens in the community, the staggered notification was problematic. Ideally both sets of letters should go out at once.

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The teens developed and wrote their own award and rejection letters. The Director worked with them on both. It was especially critical for the rejection letters to be very specific as to reasons for turning down a group, with suggestions and encouragement for making their proposals stronger.

The teens developed and wrote their own award and rejection letters. It was especially critical for the rejection letters to be very specific, with suggestions and encouragement for making their proposals stronger.

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A lot of these groups have never submitted a proposal to a foundation before. It's a big deal. It's an exciting thing, but it creates a lot of anxiety. A number of groups have really been confused by the amount of time it takes to make the decision. They don't know in advance that it's going to take a couple of months for us to reach this decision. They're not prepared for that. It's okay for adults to submit proposals to foundations and get disappointed; but when you're dealing with youth, that's a thing they have to deal with psychologically. They may really feel rejected or confused because they've put out an effort, and it may be the first time they've done that. When they don't get the money, just a rejection letter in the mail, they don't get anything to help them get beyond that. A different kind of care has to be taken in the process. (TCR staff)

An Award Ceremony was scheduled to take piace two weeks later. The publicized purpose of this event was to award grants and distribute checks to the various grantees, while determining the forms of technical assistance each group would like from TCR to help with their project. Another purpose included convening different groups of teens to meet one another and learn about their different projects, hence building bridges among groups from different parts of the city. An important objective was also public relations through comprehensive media coverage of the event. Newspapers and television and radio stations were called with news of the grants and notification of the Award Ceremony.

All of the members of each project group being funded were invited, along with the adult staff member(s) working with those groups. The meeting was held in a spacious room on the 39th floor of the Bank of New England, space which had been donated for the occasion. A group of approximately 60 people, the majority of

whom were teens from all over the city, convened in a large circle. TCR peer leaders ran the meeting from start to finish, modeling teen leadership, including the public awarding of grants and the distribution of checks. The meeting was lively, having been structured to maximize interaction both within and between the groups present. The agenda for the day, which had been prepared by the TCR peer leaders and adult staff, is in the Appendix, p.67.

Step 8: Follow-up Technical Assistance Workshops for Grantees

One of the intended roles of TCR in the grants process had been the provision of technical assistance to groups that were funded, to assist them in accomplishing their objectives. The particular form this assistance would take was to be informed by the specific needs identified by each group at the Award Ceremony. Suggested areas included planning skills, group meeting skills, outreach for the project, learning how to get media coverage, etc. (see Appendix for Technical Assistance Assessment questionnaire.) Unfortunately, there were not sufficient staff resources to be able to follow through on all the post-grant requests for technical assistance.

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There is the potential power issue of TCR being overinvolved in the work of the teen groups receiving grants. If there is to be technical assistance, it should be in response to requests by the groups.

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Note: It is clear that if this phase of technical assistance is to be implemented, additional staff time is required, both for the peer leaders (more hours or additional staff) and for the adult staff, for supervision and training.

Whether or not this is an area in which to build significant capacity is currently in question. On the one hand, there is the potential power issue of TCR being overinvolved in the work of the teen groups receiving grants. If there is to be technical assistance, it should be in response to requests by the groups, not as a result of TCR assessing needs. (See the Epilogue for a proposal addressing this issue.)

At the very least it would be helpful for the TCR teen staff to follow up with phone calls to the grantees regarding the technical assistance requested. If this is not to be done, then the expectation should not be set up at the Award Ceremony that technical assistance will be forthcoming.

Given increased capacity to follow through, it would be helpful for the teen staff to maintain ongoing contact with the groups, being available to help when needed. However, it is important to be realistic about this: If there are 25 - 30 projects funded each year, then it can be expected that at least 4 or 5 projects will want some form of aid or training workshop from TCR. That, in addition to the ongoing contact, requires a significant increase in staff time.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Makeup and Structure

Makeup

When the TCR Board was originally formed, the objectives were to have immediate exposure and high visibility for the organization, and to raise money quickly. A highly visible and credible Board was brought together, including judges, the head of the Urban League, the Commissioner of Public Health, and the Police Commissioner. Many Board members were people of color.

Although there were good reasons for choosing such a Board initially, there were built-in problems with continuity. Many members did not have a long-term investment in being actively involved in the organization, and did not have much time to devote to Board meetings. For some, this was clear from the beginning. The effect for TCR was that over the first couple of years, a Board that started out as racially diverse lost many of its members of color, and a second recruitment effort of active members from diverse groups was necessary. This experience points to the need to be clear about the short and long-term functions of the Board in the initial stages of recruitment.

Ideally, the Board would include the following:

- Teenagers from different communities
- People representing major institutions within the city - police, courts, schools
- People from the communities the organization is working within, including from churches, social service agencies
- Strong corporate representation
- Lawyer who can be called upon for legal counsel
- Diverse representation in terms of race and gender, reflecting constituency

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Structure

The Board of TCR has gone through several stages, with different committees operating at different times. There are currently two levels of Board service:

The **Advisory Board** is made up of members who are unable to make a full commitment to Board service but would like to contribute to specific areas where they possess expertise.

The **Board of Directors** is made up of active members who have a full commitment to serving on the Board, including attending three Board meetings each year and serving on at least one committee. The diversity of membership described above is the most critical at this level of the Board. Committees include an Executive Committee (Director and two co-chairs of Board), a Grants Committee, a Publicity Committee, and a Program / Policy Committee.

Incorporating Teen Involvement on the Board of Directors

In 1987, Wanda Fleming, the first Director of TCR, recruited a teenage girl to serve on the TCR Board of Directors. The initial motivation behind recruitment of the first teen was to build in youth analysis and input at the Board level in the review of community service projects that were submitted for funding. Until 1989, this first teen representative remained the only teen serving on the Board. In this capacity she was involved in the two annual TCR Board meetings where the bulk of the discussion was devoted to grant review.

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The orientation before each meeting proved critical, and was directly proportional to the teens' level of participation at the meetings.

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After the Tribute to Teens in November, 1989, TCR staff set in motion a process that invited members of the planning committee for the event to apply for four teen Board positions. Seven teens responded to the mailing that was sent out. All of the teens were interviewed individually and given a full breakdown of TCR activities and the roles and responsibilities of a TCR Board member. The four teens selected had all been involved in previously funded TCR projects, and came from diverse communities and backgrounds.

These four joined the original teen on the Board of Directors. The first concrete task of the teen Board members was to develop a new set of funding criteria for reviewing TCR grant proposals. Two orientation sessions were organized with the teen members of the Board before the Grants Committee meetings. These sessions provided a less formal and charged setting for the teens to carefully review the proposal write-ups, raise questions, and debate the relative strengths and weaknesses of each project.

This kind of orientation before each meeting proved critical, and was directly proportional to the teens' level of participation at the meetings. However, when the full Board meetings took place and areas of discussion came up that did not have to do with the grants process, the teens had very little basis or knowledge about the topics that would encourage their participation.

By the fall of 1990, two of the teens had graduated and moved on. At the same time that TCR moved forward with the hiring of six peer leaders, it also sent out a mailing inviting teens to apply for the two openings on the Board of Directors. One teen was eventually recruited.

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In an organization such as TCR adults need to be ready to run meetings differently, to listen, and to refrain from charging ahead while young people are struggling with ideas.

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The teens on the Board had, by this time, been asked to be involved in the work of additional committees of TCR's Board of Directors, such as the Strategic Planning Committee. However, except for an orientation to the grants process that was carried out with the TCR peer leaders present, there was no explicit training or convening of the teen Board members before Grants Committee meetings or before full Board meetings. This negatively affected the teens' level of engagement and interest in serving on the Board of Directors. All of the current TCR staff's energy had gone into orienting the teen staff members to the meetings and preparing them to take on leadership roles in these meetings. Very little energy had been put into developing roles for the teen Board members at TCR that were concrete, that involved real decision-making, and that provided the teens with a learning context to enable them to participate fully in TCR's development.

From this experience, TCR learned that job descriptions alone are not enough to empower teens. Including teens without a strategy for training and support results only in tokenism; teens are given a place at the table, but they are not given the means to participate effectively. Adults have specific ideas of what it means to be on a Board; however, in an organization such as TCR they need to be ready to run meetings differently, to listen, and to refrain from charging ahead while young people are struggling with ideas, while at the same time not coddling or enabling inappropriate behavior on the part of the teens.

The lack of teen Board development crosses over into the lack of Board development overall at TCR. A major priority for the summer and fall of 1991 is to begin to turn this around in actively addressing the development of the Board, and increasing the involvement of teens. The challenge for the adults involved with TCR is to design structures that will allow the teens to take on real power and responsibility. In part, this means being able to alter the traditional meeting styles that most of the adults have mastered. For all of those involved, great flexibility

is required, including willingness to move away from structures that allow highly verbal and articulate people to hold power. Traditional meeting styles are not designed with the objectives of participation and interaction in mind, focusing instead on accomplishing a task as efficiently as possible, with little attention to process. At TCR it quickly became evident that alternative meeting styles were necessary to reflect the concept and practice of empowerment at all levels of the organization. Such a shift from the traditional modes was difficult, however, and is an area needing significant improvement in coming years.

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Traditional meeting styles are not designed with the objectives of participation and interaction in mind, focusing instead on accomplishing a task as efficiently as possible, with little attention to process.

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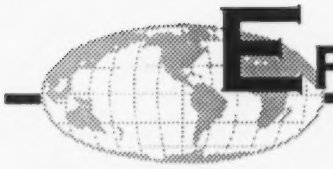
Also, there were no policies or systems developed to keep the teens involved after they had left the Board, even in an advisory capacity. This was a mistake that needs to be rectified by keeping these teens on as Advisory Board members and keeping them on our regular mailings to Board members. (One of the teens recently expressed interest in staying informed and attending meetings when she was home from college.)

Some of the ideas for what needs to occur at this point are as follows:

- Allow more time for orientation.
- Do outreach to our funded projects to recruit teens to serve on the Board of Directors
- Convene the group of teens on the Board on a regular basis (perhaps monthly), with some of these meetings happening with the teen staff.
- Come up with ways of keeping the teens engaged on a regular basis, perhaps with monthly meetings that focus on a particular area of work. This could include reviewing the budget, program, policy, development, or working on the production of an annual report or special event.
- Educate the teens on basic nonprofit management: how a nonprofit functions, roles and responsibilities of Board members, and the differing roles of Board and staff members.
- Develop explicit training for both teen and adult Board members on how the two groups will work together.
- Build in a structure so that teen members who graduate can still be kept abreast of TCR activities. They are our best spokespeople and need to stay connected.



EPILOGUE

This document has provided a view into the workings of Teens as Community Resources, Inc. with a focus on the year 1990-91, during which a new peer leadership program was piloted. The intent, as described in this manual, was to increase the representation, involvement, and leadership of teens in the work of TCR, incorporating the concept of empowerment at all levels of the organization. The outcome has been both exciting and rewarding. There have also been many lessons which point to changes in the future.

These lessons, in addition to evaluative interviews with staff and Board members, have resulted in reflection on how to do things differently in the next year. This epilogue describes some of the issues which have been identified, as well as proposed changes and new directions the organization may choose to follow in the coming months. This includes recommendations from the Director to the organization, based on the evaluation of the pilot year.

Clarifying Programmatic Objectives

One of the major problems throughout the year has been insufficient staffing to accomplish all that the organization set out to do. Within the grantmaking process, the intended post-funding technical assistance did not occur on a consistent, in-depth basis. Community organizing and development at the neighborhood level was not a focus of the work of the peer leaders, or of the grantmaking process. These realities have raised some important questions. At this point TCR is covering two significant organizational functions: grantmaking, and city-wide advocacy around youth issues (including spinoff projects). If TCR is committed to providing technical assistance to funded projects, and/or if TCR wishes to have a community organizing focus, then there needs to be a significant shift in the current priorities and structuring of the work, as well as in staffing capacity.

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There have also been many lessons which point to changes in the future. These lessons have resulted in reflection on how to do things differently in the next year.

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One possibility that has been discussed has been cutting back on the advocacy and project work, and focusing more time and energy on facilitating an effective grantmaking process. This would allow increased time for preparation, adult supervision at initial site visits, and technical assistance. For the remaining advocacy projects, the peer leaders could have an increased role in determining the projects in which they get involved.

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The intent of the pilot year described in this manual was to increase the representation, involvement, and leadership of teens in the work of TCR. There have been many lessons which point to changes in the future.

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One of the ideas of bringing peer leaders on was that they would organize their own projects and also do the grants process. But they haven't really organized their own projects. The CLT rally, the teen pregnancy conference — those were broader things and weren't really the peer leaders' ideas. Those ideas were brought to them and then it was part of our job to organize them. Which isn't to say that any of the projects they organized are things they didn't want to do. But they never really went into the neighborhoods, evaluated the strengths and weaknesses, and then decided to take on a project. Right now it seems that in some ways the events are adult-driven and are looking for teen representation to come and talk to the media or come and talk at a press conference. Now these are important, and it's exciting that they're involved in these adult kind of spheres that they weren't involved in before. But that takes up a lot of time, and it means they don't get the opportunity to choose for themselves what it is they want to be spending their time doing. (TCR staff)

Related to questions about implementing a community organizing focus are concerns about the kinds of projects funded by TCR, and the impact of those grants on the community. Should there be fewer larger grants? Should a percentage of the funds be set aside for larger grants? Should some of the funds be linked to different areas of advocacy? To address some of the issues raised above, the Director developed the following proposal:

A Proposal About Where We Might Go With the Grants Process

We are trying to meet the challenge of feeding our interests in community organizing into our ongoing grants process.

1) Currently we are involving our peer leaders in adult-oriented organizing projects which are already in-process. Instead, their job description could delineate the expectation that the team develop their own initiative in the community, focusing on some issue or problem that the group identifies as important to work on. This project would be ongoing throughout the year. The teens would identify an area and organize an approach. It could still be a project that convenes the teens around some city-wide initiative. This would also address the desire expressed by the teens to have more time to work together as a team.

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Should a percentage of the funds be set aside for larger grants? Should some of the funds be linked to different areas of advocacy?

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2) Develop outreach materials that would advertise two pots of money at TCR that would involve groups in two distinct processes.

a. One pot of money (smaller grants) for teen groups who have a project which is ready to go. All they need is the cash, and perhaps some light technical assistance that our staff could easily provide.

b. Another pot of money for teen groups who are just starting to meet and want TCR to work with them over the long term to develop their project. It would be clear to both the applicants and the TCR staff which groups are inviting more indepth assistance over the year. This would enable TCR to plan accordingly. This method would present a less charged way for our teens who are in the role of funder to work in greater depth with community groups on community organizing initiatives.

We would access these groups to training from a range of people who have expertise in different areas, such as CFS organizing and advocacy, Prevention Center: substance abuse, Poder Latino: AIDS Education, Media people from community newspapers. TCR would develop agreements with each of these groups. Our peer leaders would meet with the adult or teen trainers from these groups to help design a workshop for TCR projects. This pool of trainers would take the burden off our staff to develop expertise in these areas.

Staffing — Considerations of Race and Age

It is important that communities look carefully at who the constituencies are, and to have the constituency reflected in the make-up of the staff, especially in senior level positions. This would provide increased input and authority in decision-making from a person(s) representing some of the experience and perspective of the constituency served. The Director, Tim Cross, states it very clearly:

With an organization this size, the day to day visioning and program decisions are determined by the Director. The young people we work with are predominately Afro-American and Latino. If the one person the organization is centering around is white, then a huge amount of perspective is lost regarding work in the communities we serve. This inevitably limits the effectiveness of what we do. Right now we basically have two whites developing programming. Given the importance of class and race perspectives, we need to change this.

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It is important that communities look carefully at who the constituencies are, and to have the constituency reflected in the make-up of the staff, especially in senior level positions.

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If the current Executive Director, who is white, continues in that capacity, then another senior level position could be created. This could be done through upgrading the Program Director position to Deputy Director, with a commitment to fill that position with a person of color. This person would need to have additional skills and experience, including administrative work, working with Boards, strategic thinking, program planning and coordination, as well as direct program experience with young people. If the

Executive Director were a person of color, this upgrading would not be necessary, retaining the Program Director position.

One of the things I worry about and that I see happening is that if the black people you give power to are just youth, then you' re automatically at an advantage again, because the youth don't have the same kind of power that you have or the same experience or understanding. That just comes with maturity. Again, you may be getting black input or perspectives, but it's not at the same level. There has to be black adult leadership. (TCR staff)

There also needs to be a young adult (early to mid-twenties), who can act as a bridge to the teens on staff — someone who is closer to their experience. This person could be in the position of Program Director or Program Assistant. The Program Director, an Afro-American woman, is 24 years old, thus bringing both the perspective of an Afro-American and also acting as the bridge in terms of age. The Program Assistant position is currently an extended peer leader position (one of the peer leaders who is working 20 hours per week). The Training Consultant is a white man, and although officially accountable to the Director, is at a similar level to the Director in doing training with the teens as well as strategizing. In the coming year, the Training Consultant will be less involved in planning, functioning more as a resource person in training the peer leaders at particular stages where needed.

Role Clarification

It is evident that there is a need for clarification around roles and responsibilities among the different staff positions. It is most critical that there be a clear understanding of the lines of power, influence, and decision-making. The relationship between staff and Board has been clear, but the subtleties between different levels of staff have presented some confusion. The peer leaders are involved in all of the programmatic areas, including much of the planning, but in terms of decision-making and authority they are not on an equal level with the Director and Program Director. There were some instances during the year where the teen staff had the impression that they had decision-making power, only to find that the final decision was made by the Director or Program Director. Given the issues of empowerment and responsibility, it is important that extra care be taken to continually make these lines clear, ensuring that everyone shares the same understanding.

One of the peer leaders was saying that she would say things and that we weren't really going to act on what she was saying ultimately, that it wasn't an equal relationship. I think maybe we posed the relationship as equal in the beginning. It's almost like we have veto power in what they choose to do. So that needs to be communicated a little bit better. (TCR staff)

Training for Empowerment

Is the training model designed to empower teens as comprehensive and effective as it could be? How might it be altered and enhanced to improve it further? What can we learn from other models? There are no clear answers to these questions at this time, but there is a recognized need to look at them in constantly reevaluating the work of TCR.

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We need to bring what's going on in the world into the work place and make it a relevant part of our training and discussion.

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One suggestion has been to spend some time on the cultural/historical/spiritual side of the legacy of different groups of people organizing for change in their communities. Another is to address ways that the teens can relate to the day to day crises which occur in their neighborhoods.

Teen empowerment is important but it needs to be placed in a context. We need to bring what's going on in the world into the work place and make it a relevant part of our training and discussion. We say, Oh that's terrible, now let's sit down and talk about the upcoming board meeting or press conference. There isn't enough conversation around the real issues. I think TCR does incredible work. It's on the cutting edge of building leadership skills in young people. It's revolutionary. It's a very exciting thing to be a part of, but I think there is still

farther we can go. We need to look at other models for inspiration also. Just one model is not going to be suitable. There has to be a model that takes history into account and takes culture into account. (TCR staff)

I think (the peer leaders) need more training on how to deal with other people's crises in your own neighborhood like drugs and violence, and then how do you deal with it in your personal life? It's also important to know how to go into neighborhoods and get people excited and motivated behind an idea. (TCR staff)

Another suggestion has been to expand the trainings to include sessions on how to deal with the media, or publicizing events, or fundraising, or crisis management. This would facilitate the peer leaders' learning specific content skills which would be useful in many settings, in addition to the current skills in planning and facilitating meetings. A staff member gives an example relative to fundraising:

It's important for peer leaders to understand how it is we get our money and how to get money when you want to do something. Now that's really empowering. Understanding how money gets exchanged and how you get access to resources. Like one of the peer leaders has worked here the entire year and now he wants to go to Africa, and he's trying to raise $4000. But he doesn't have a plan. He has worked at a foundation, but he doesn't really understand how to raise money for himself or how to apply to other places.

An important issue which has been raised is that of addressing issues of race and racism more directly with the youth - how it affects the teens in their lives and work, and even in the dynamics of working with each other. This applies to the organization as a whole as well, fostering an atmosphere where staff can acknowledge and discuss racial dynamics.

As far as the organization itself goes, if we're going to work primarily with at-risk, inner city black and Latino youth, because most of the grantees we fund are from Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan, then I think it's so important to be more open to discussing racism, acknowledging racism, and I think it's a big thing that is missing in the organization. (TCR staff)

Ageism is an institutional thing that keeps youth from being able to express themselves and experience power, like the school system or political systems. They don't have the same kinds of rights that adults have, being young people. That is a very serious problem. But in my mind a more serious problem is racism. Lack of economic opportunity and all the racial institutional barriers don't tend to be addressed at all. I think that is a big oversight. It is perceived as a disunifying factor for youth. It's something that doesn't really allow itself to be expressed that much because it tears apart at this whole idea we're trying to create of youth empowerment — united youth. Then you start talking about racism and the white kids think it's divisive, that it separates kids. But black youth experience life

differently. That really needs to be acknowledged and appreciated. That has to be a part of empowerment and training. Discomfort is a good thing sometimes. We need to examine it, why people feel uncomfortable. Maybe that's from racism. If people are uncomfortable then maybe learning's going on and that's good. It doesn't push them to grow as much as they could grow. (TCR staff)

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An important issue which has been raised is that of addressing issues of race and racism more directly with the youth - how it affects the teens in their lives and work, and even in the dynamics of working with each other.

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Counseling

The peer leaders came from varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, reflecting the constituency of inner city youth served by TCR. There are frequent crises and sometimes traumas which these teens experience in their daily lives. During the pilot year, peer leaders lost friends to street violence, and were faced with a range of family problems.

Given the conditions of the lives of these young people, there is a need for some counseling capacity on the staff of TCR. This could take many forms. For example, the staff could be trained in crisis counseling, with information about referrals where needed, or a qualification for one of the new staff hired could be some experience with emotional counseling. At this point in time it has simply been acknowledged that this need exists.

Evaluation

For some time there has been a stated need for ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of TCR's work. The reasons for evaluation are to learn about the impact of the grantmaking program, determine whether the goals/mission are being met, and demonstrate to funders the success of TCR's work. Due to limited staff capacity, this evaluation process is just starting to get underway.

Teens on the Board

One of the areas needing attention in the coming year is the development and integration of teen leadership on the Board of Directors. Having teens represented on the Board is not sufficient. It is critical that there be the necessary preparation and training of the teens, and conscious development of the whole Board around issues of teen empowerment. (See pp.38 for a full discussion, with recommendations).

Board Involvement in the Grants Process

The Board of Directors discusses and approves the recommendations for which teen-run projects receive funding. From that point on, Board members have little concept of what actually occurs. This relates to the need for evaluation of the impact of the projects funded, so that the Board has some sense of what is working and what is not. But this points to another need as well: for Board members to actually get out into the community and visit some of the projects receiving funding. In this way they would obtain first-hand knowledge of the work of TCR.

Maintaining Energy

The staff at TCR, teens and adults alike, were overloaded this year with the amount and the variety of work to be accomplished. The work was exciting and stimulating, but by the end of the year, energy was beginning to lag. This raises again the issue of staff capacity, and the need to clearly define objectives and structure the work in such a way as to preserve energy, providing ample opportunities for replenishment.

One staff member noted that more frequent periods when staff could take breaks and just enjoy each other's company would make a significant difference. Along the same lines would be taking an afternoon and going on an outing together, or having a barbecue. Another suggestion was to have more frequent times for "feedback" and appreciation. TCR fosters a sense of family and support important to the work and culture of the organization, but in order to continue to do so, time for staff to be with each other in relaxed ways is required.

There needs to be more down time and time to nurture people more. Maybe more enrichment activities. It always kind of gets put on the back burner. I don't expect my work environment to feel like family totally, but I think this place has the capability to build those kinds of relationships. If they did have those relationships, then when crises come up they would be easier to get through. (TCR staff)

Closing Remarks

What has been learned in this pilot year will be invaluable in moving forward and continuing to strengthen the program described here. The process of incorporating teen involvement and leadership at all levels of TCR's functioning has been incredibly exciting and rewarding. This excitement has been reflected in the staff, the Board, other agencies, the media, and the community at large. The degree and quality of leadership development which has occurred is inspiring, demonstrating the potential for youth to be empowered to assume effective leadership in creating positive change in their communities. The impact of such leadership development on all of the teens involved is profound. This model has far reaching implications and potential applications which have yet to unfold.

TCR

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APPENDIX

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Teen Empowerment, Inc.

Teen Empowerment, Inc. (TE) served in a consulting capacity to TCR, working collaboratively to develop the program during the pilot year described in this monograph. Much of the material in this Appendix was developed by Teen Empowerment.

Teen Empowerment programming is a comprehensive model for youth work that involves training teens to take on positions of real responsibility and authority within their own programs. The model is designed to respond directly to the needs of adolescents for respect and recognition, to give teens the skills they need to organize and run programs, and to promote many kinds of diversity.

For information about Teen Empowerment training and program development services, contact:

Teen Empowerment, Inc.
312 Stuart St.
Boston, MA 02116
(617) 338-4992

HIRING

Group interviews #1

1. Welcome; short explanation of the TCR jobs; description of and rationale for the interview process.

2. Introductions and warm-up: Each person (including the interviewers) says their name and what they would do if they had a million dollars.

3. Warm-up: Word association game and contest.

4. Brainstorm. Explain the rules of brainstorming:
    a. Say the first thing that comes to your mind. Don't censor your ideas.
    b. Don't worry if your idea is similar to something that has already been said; say it anyway. It will keep the creative energies going.
    c. Don't evaluate ideas until the brainstorm is completed. The goal of brainstorming isn't quality, but quantity.
    d. Don't get into discussions of any ideas until the brainstorm is completed.
    e. There should be no put-downs of anyone or any ideas.

The group brainstorms on the question "What problems do youth in Boston face?" The interviewer writes all ideas on large sheets of paper.

The group then discusses the problems with the goal of choosing the most important problem from the list. When the most important problem is chosen, the group brainstorms on the question "What are some solutions to this problem?"

Finally, we explain that on the job, the process we have just gone through would be the first step to helping a group identify projects they can undertake to help solve the problem.

5. We explain how the rest of the interview will proceed.

6. Evaluation: The applicants are asked to evaluate the meeting on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best.

Written Applications - Questions

- Why do you want this job?
- What do you think is the most important issue or problem facing teenagers today, and why?
- What do you think will be the hardest part of this job, and why?
- What do you want to get out of this job?

Individual Interviews #1

- What did you think of the group exercises?
- Have you ever been involved in organizing a project? What was your role? How did the project turn out?
- What is the longest amount of time you've been involved in something? What was it? Why was it important to you?
- Tell us about a time when you helped someone.
- Tell us about a time when someone helped you.
- Do you have any questions for us?
- Are you available to work during the hours required for this job?

Group Interviews #2

1. Welcome
2. Warm-up: State your name, and what you think is the best age to be and why.
3. Wordstorm on "Leadership." We put the word on a large sheet of paper and asked the group to say any words that came to mind in response to the word. We wrote all the words on the paper. When there were no more words coming from the group, we conducted a discussion about leadership, prompting the group with questions such as, "Which of these qualities do you or don't you have?"
4. Pairs. We paired off the members of the group and gave each pair a handout describing several group exercises. Each pair's task was to choose an exercise from the handout, or make up an exercise of their own, then do that exercise with the whole group.
5. Exercises and feedback. Each pair did its chosen exercise with the group. The group then gave the pair some feedback on the exercise and how it was conducted.
6. Evaluation

Individual Interviews #2

1. Please describe the job as you see it and give your impression of the job.
2. What do think is the easiest part of this job? the hardest?
3. What skills will you need to do this job? What skills do you want to develop with this job?
4. What is the longest amount of time you have stayed with something? Why did you stay involved with it?

TRAINING

Program Purpose Workshop

In the Program Purpose training session, the teen staff brainstormed the problems that confront teens in Boston. They then listed the problems in order of the severity of impact on teens. Then, when there was general agreement about the most serious problem, they considered the problem in relation to the following concepts:

- Objectives: What is TCR's goal in relation to this problem? The trainer must emphasize to the group that their goal is *not to solve the problems faced by youth in the community, but to have a positive impact on the problems*. To set the goal of solving the problem is a set-up for failure.
- Strategies: What can TCR do to accomplish the objective?
- Measures: How will TCR measure the degree to which the strategies employed have been successful? The trainer keeps the group focused on measuring in relation to the objective: to have an impact on the problem, not to solve the problem.

The trainer then leads the teens to some perspective on the problem by asking them to look at:

- the differences among communities: Not all communities suffer so much from these problems.
- the history of this community: This community has not always suffered so much from these problems.

This leads to the understanding that change is possible. Things were not always this bad, and they are not this bad everywhere. Therefore, we can have an impact on the problems, as they are not inherent.

Contracting Workshop

The first contracting workshop, held shortly after the teen staff are hired, establishes the rationale for having rules. The basic format is as follows:

- Participants are asked to list their personal goals and look at what happens if they don't meet those goals.
- They then brainstorm the goals of the group and make a similar appraisal of what happens if the group's goals are not met. (In the case of an organization like TCR, which is working to have an impact on the serious problems faced by teens in Boston, failure to meet the group's goals can have critical consequences in people's lives).

• The group is then asked to consider the case of a person who does not take the group's goals seriously, recognizing that the group must protect itself from this.

Ideally, the work contract is monitored weekly at a specific time. This approach makes the imposition of a penalty more objective by taking it out of the moment of the infraction. The whole process then becomes fair and predictable. Teens internalize the expected behavior and do not need to be monitored so closely on a day-to-day basis.

At TCR this year, the capacity of the adult staff to monitor the contract was limited, and commitment to this process was not strong. Therefore, contract monitoring was inconsistent.

Group Feedback and Communication Workshops

In this workshop, various group games and exercises are used that help the participants focus on:

- the flow of communication in their group
- how it feels to receive positive feedback and negative feedback
- how it feels to give positive and negative feedback

The group then receives an explanation of the guidelines for receiving and for giving feedback. Often role-plays are used to demonstrate good and bad ways to give negative feedback.

After all this preparatory work, the participants are given some time to make notes for themselves about the feedback they want to give to the other group members. Then the group moves into rotating pairs. Each person spends a few minutes with each other person, both giving feedback to and receiving feedback from that person. Finally, everyone evaluates the meeting.

Group Meeting/Group Development Workshop

In this workshop, teens learn how to work with the following meeting format:

1. Meeting purpose and agenda
2. Warm-up: Name and question
3. Group game
4. Work section
5. Evaluation

The teen staff learn how to use effective techniques within each part of the format. They work with numerous warm-ups and group games and discuss the necessity of finding the appropriate level of risk for the group. (For example, saying your name and your favorite food is a low-risk warm-up; saying your name and what you plan to do after high school graduation is higher risk.) They also learn the following:

- How to choose warm-ups and games that introduce and reinforce the topic of the meeting.
- How to run brainstorms and to work with the information that results
- How to reach the goals of the meeting by breaking large groups down into smaller working groups.
- The importance of the meeting evaluation and various methods for doing it

However, the most important work of this module is not in technique, but in understanding the emotional components of leadership and of group interaction. Points that are covered include:

- What it means to take on leadership
- How to cope with the fear and vulnerability you feel when you put yourself out in this way
- How to work with your own resistance to being a leader
- Recognizing and understanding the resistance that exists in the group to participating in a meeting
- How to work with people's resistance to breaking down into small groups; understanding the importance of using smaller units to get the work done
- How to create a setting that is conducive to the work that must be done

Teen staff work in this module to plan meetings that they will be running. The first step is always to ask the question, "Why are we doing this meeting?" and to establish the goals. Then the adult trainer provides a meeting format, and puts the staff in pairs to discuss it and suggest changes. Next, they take on assignments for leading different parts of the meeting. Finally, they role-play the meeting. This last step is essential to the success of the meetings; if the meeting is not role-played in advance, the actual meeting inevitably serves as the role-play, with mixed results.

As the staff becomes more adept at leading meetings, the training emphasizes the need for increased awareness of the needs of the group. The staff are trained to view their responsibilities as leaders in a complete way — not simply, "I'll run my exercise and I'm done."

This training module introduces all this, but learning how to run meetings well is an ongoing process. The module stresses that the meeting format is just a guide; group leaders must evaluate every situation and be able to work with it as it comes up.

The role of the adult staff in this process is to facilitate the work of the teen staff through providing them with complete and well-thought-out documents describing how to run meetings and exercises. Without this, lower-functioning teens won't be able to do this complex work.

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

Event Planning - Maximizing teen involvement in events

The role of the adult organizers and trainers in events run by the TCR teens was to enable the youth to exercise power and responsibility by providing them with the skills they needed. This is an ongoing, evolving process. Adults must ask themselves, "How much do I have to do to ensure the success of the teens on the project, to enable the teens to do the rest?" They must always be asking this question and have an ongoing awareness of the need to do as much as necessary, but no more.

In addition, adults must constantly look for the power points and work to bring teens into those points. For example, rather than looking for a celebrity to emcee an event, find a teen to do the job.

Adults also need to work in resource-development — not writing a teen's speech, for example, but typing it up and providing feedback.

Enrichment Activities

***Enrichment #1** - December 20, 1990*

The purposes of this event were to initiate the idea of doing enrichment activities together, get to know each other better, and learn about the lives and struggles of other teens abroad. The activities began with introductions, a warm-up exercise, and a skit put on by the Program Directors. The skit illustrated what the teens might be feeling and how enrichments could help alleviate the pressure of their work, give their work greater meaning, and provide time to socialize.

After dinner, the focus changed to examining what life is like for teens in different parts of the world. A film by UNICEF was shown which illustrated how painful and difficult life is for children in other parts of the world. After the film, the guest speaker, a local high school student and a black South African, spoke about her childhood. Because her parents opposed the South African government, a number of family members were killed or tortured and she was shot, leaving her paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair.

Following these presentations, the group spoke candidly about the reasons for doing community service and organizing work and the tendency to take things for granted in the United States.

***Enrichment #2** - March 16, 1991*

The TCR and JFK Program Directors along with peer leaders from each group organized a day ski trip to Killington, Vermont. The purpose of this enrichment was to have fun, get to know each other, travel outside of Boston, and experience something culturally different (skiing!). Prior to the event there was a safety training and everyone was fitted for boots and skis. Through the Youth Enrichment Services (Y.E.S.) Program, the group was able to go skiing for a nominal price.

***Enrichment #3** - May 2, 1991*

The purpose of this enrichment was to learn about youth leadership and empowerment as well as American history by looking at the civil rights movement. The speaker, who was an Associate Producer for "Eyes on the Prize II" and former member of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) during the sixties, spoke about what it was like to be a young organizer and activist. She showed portions of the documentary and shared her experiences about her involvement in freedom rides, sit-ins, demonstrations and organizing. After the question and answer period, everyone had dinner and socialized.

GRANTS PROCESS

Examples of funded projects

What kinds of project ideas does TCR support?

• TCR funds projects that are created by teens and give teens the chance to take on roles of responsibility and organizing. The projects must address real community needs and contribute to ongoing efforts to build teen leadership and power.

• Teens may develop a project that has them working with the elderly, the homeless, or young children; or they may creatively work on violence and drug prevention, health related education, prejudice reduction, or public art projects that bring a local neighborhood together. These are a few examples of the range of ways teens have focused their community problem solving in the past.

Examples of specific projects:

• In Boston's South End, teens organized a project to fix up a local youth center for use by neighborhood teens. Once established, the youth center has served as a central organizing place for conflict resolution workshops, neighborhood clean-ups, police and teen dialogues and the planning of recreational activities.

• In Dorchester, a group of Haitian teens organized a youth fair to educate their peers on a number of sexuality related issues that affect young people. The teens continued discussions that started at the fair in the context of radio and T.V. interviews.

• A group of South Boston and Dorchester teens organized an event that brought together elderly people, young children and students at the Massachusetts Hospital School for a day of personal exchange and the development of a series of group art projects.

• A group of students at Hyde Park High School organized two holiday meals for women staying at Boston City Hospital. The students worked in conjunction with the Boston Food Pantry to prepare and distribute the meals.

(excerpted from an informational flyer on TCR developed by the peer leaders)

Agenda for Orientation Workshop

-for peer leaders and teen Board members

- Warm-up: Say your name and how you got involved in TCR
- Wordstorms: "Facilitation" and "Decision-making"
  (Encourage everyone to participate even if they don't know the meaning of the words.)
- Use to define roles of Board (Decision-makers) vs. Staff (Facilitators)
- Review timeline and demarcate where power shift takes place:

Staff

Put out RFP's....RFP's back.....Review RFP's.....Do site visits.....Write reports and put in recommended categories

Board

1st Grants Committee meeting.....2nd Grants Committee meeting..... Recommendations to full Board and final vote

Staff

Awards Ceremony.....Technical assistance meeting.....Monitor project

- Small groups: Review last year's grant criteria sheet and make recommendations for changes
- Report Back
- Discuss and finalize criteria sheet
- Evaluate meeting from 1-10

Note: There was not enough time in the orientation session to deal with funding criteria satisfactorily. The recommendation here would be to have two separate sessions, one to clarify roles, and one just to discuss funding criteria. The Director points out as well that "We should have taken the time, like we did with the teen Board members last year, to look at a series of case examples of old proposals; pair people up; critique the proposals; develop questions, concerns, etc. We also could have roleplayed a Grants Committee meeting."

Preparing Peer Leaders to Lead a Workshop - Format

(adapted from Teen Empowerment's Peer Leader Training Materials)

SESSION 1 - (approx. 1 1/2 hours)

- Review Meeting Purpose and Agenda

The purpose of this meeting is to learn how to prepare and lead a workshop. First we will do some warm-up exercises, which helps people get to know each other better in workshops. Then we'll do a brainstorm which gets people thinking about the subject. Then we'll get a chance to talk in pairs, do a role-play and finally we'll evaluate the meeting.

- Warm-Up

  Say the first word you think of when you hear the word "teenager." Everyone throws out their ideas in a brainstorm format.

- Game — Word-Storm

Now we're going to do an exercise called a word-storm. This will get us thinking about the subject of the workshop. I'll write a word on the board. You say whatever words come to your mind when you see this word, and I'll write them down as fast as I can. There are a few guidelines to follow:

- Quantity is important. Say whatever words you think of.
- Similar words are OK.
- Don't evaluate any of the words as they are coming out, not even with positive comments. Especially don't put anything down. Put-downs stop the creative flow from the group.
- Don't discuss any of the words that come out. We'll save that for later.

Write "Meeting" (or whatever) on the board. Now say whatever words come to your mind when you see this word, "Meeting." OK, let's go.

Write down all the words. When the group has no more words to offer, look over the words and lead a discussion about what this list of words tells us. You can ask question like:

Are there any words up there that seem unusual to you?

Which word really means "Meeting" to you?

Which words show the positive sides of meetings?

Which words show the negative sides?

- Brainstorm: Goals of the Meeting

Now we are going to do a brainstorm of the Goals of the Meeting or workshop that is being planned. Brainstorming is a way that groups can get lots of ideas out and help come up with goals and solutions to problems. All you do is say your ideas out loud while I write them down. Follow the same guidelines as for the word-storm.

During the brainstorm, be sure that everyone follows the rules (Make sure, in a nice way, that there is no evaluating and no discussing the ideas until the brainstorm is done.) Keep encouraging people to express their ideas and keep the brainstorm going. Silence is OK — don't end too soon.

• Discuss Goals and List Which Are Most Important

Now let's take a look at the list. Are there any goals that should be eliminated? (Discuss and decide.) Are there any that are too general and could be more specific? Are there any ideas that should be combined? Does anyone have any other ideas?

• Narrowing Down List

We have a lot of good ideas here. Now we need to narrow the list down. We need to choose from this list the most important goals of the meeting.

• Present a proposed agenda for the Workshop format

• Pairs

Now we are going to spend a few minutes talking in pairs. In your pairs you should consider the workshop format model and make any recommendations or changes. Does it meet the goals which have been identified?

• Report Back

Now we'd like to present changes/or recommendations that the pairs have come up with.

• Group Discussion: Decide on Final Format

• Evaluation (see below)

SESSION 2 - (approx. 1 1/2 hours)

• Warm-up

• Decide on Who Does What (Assignments)

• Role-Play the Format

• Make Further Adjustments on Format

• Evaluation

We've come to the end of the session. Before we leave I'd like to ask everyone to evaluate the meeting. Let's go around and rate the meeting on a scale of 1 to 10 — 10 being fantastic and 1 meaning it was terrible, and please say a word or phrase to describe the meeting.

Roles of Staff and Board - definitions from orientation

Teen Staff Roles

• Develop outreach materials in the form of a brochure and RFP; carry out direct outreach through a broad mailing to approximately 2000 neighborhood youth groups

- Provide direct training and technical assistance to youth groups in developing project ideas
- Assist groups in filling out applications
- Conduct site visits
- Develop proposal summaries: present to members of the Grants Committee
- Inform youth groups of Board decisions and reasoning
- Provide on-going follow-up technical support to projects, the particular form of support being unclear at this point

Teen Board Roles

- Review written proposal assessments
- Finalize funding criteria
- Get staff to clarify questions about proposals
- Ensure that proposals meet all TCR funding criteria
- Make final decisions on distribution of grants
- Assist with technical assistance to grantees

Funding Criteria

- degree of teen involvement in decision-making and leadership
- degree of realism, organization and planning of project
- extent to which project fulfills community need

Application form for grants

The application form starts out with a brief paragraph of welcome and explanation. The application deadline is made clear, along with the return address and phone number for TCR. The applying group is then asked to answer the following questions:

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Organization name and address
- Primary contact person
- Telephone #

YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Briefly describe the purpose of your group
- Who does your group serve? (age, race, sex and/or neighborhood)
- How long has your group been working together and what are some of its major accomplishments?
- Number of paid employees 1) who are adults, and 2) who are youth
- Number of volunteers 1) who are adults, and 2) who are youth

YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT

- Project's name
- Describe your project, how it started and what you hope to accomplish. Please be specific.
- What is your project's timeline; when will it begin and end?
- Which, if any, organizations or agencies will be involved in this project. List addresses.
- What roles will teens play in this project and what roles have they played in the development of this grant?
- How will you measure the success of your project? Be specific.

YOUR PROJECT'S BUDGET

- What funding, if any, do you already have for this project?
- How much money is being requested from TCR?
- Who will oversee the use and distribution of these funds?
- Please attach a project budget, and indicate how a TCR grant would be spent.

Please list the people who helped to complete this proposal: Names, addresses, signatures.

(Applicants are encouraged to call the TCR office at any time with questions during the process of filling out this application)

Pre-Application Technical Assistance Workshops

Workshop 1

- Introductions and warm-ups: Human Knot, Name Game
- Review the agenda and purpose of the workshop
- Wordstorm on "Teenager"
- Discussion of relative power and powerlessness of teens
- Brainstorm on issues that affect your community or workplace. Choose 3 issues
- Small group work on how to address an issue named in the brainstorm. Each group takes an issue. A TCR teen facilitates each group. The group brainstorms possible solutions (projects). Realistic possibilities are discussed. The group then chooses one possible project and brainstorms everything they would need to implement that project.
- Report backs from the small groups
- Follow up: How to use ideas from the workshop to develop a project idea
- Form a committee to work on the project, and, if they choose, to have a follow-up meeting with TCR staff to fill out an application for funding. This meeting would take place at the TCR office.
- Evaluate the meeting

Workshop 2

- Introductions: Name Game
- Review the agenda and purpose of the workshop
- Warm-up: Switch Swatch
- Review the outcomes of the last meeting - what has the teen group decided to focus on?
- Brainstorm: Questions on application
- Small groups work on filling out the application
- Reports back from small groups
- Explain the grant process and deadline
- Evaluate the meeting

Meeting format for Site Visits

- Introduction and warm-up: Say your name and a word that describes this project.
- Pairs: Discuss one thing you like and one thing you don't like about this project.
- Brainstorm a list of the goals of the project.
- Brainstorm everything needed to do the project.
- Answer questions about the project, developed for the site by the visiting team.
- Ask if teens have questions about TCR and its process.
- Evaluate the meeting.

Funding Request Evaluation Form

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Sponsoring agency
- Project name
- Agency's overall operating budget
- Number of adults working on project who are a) paid, b) unpaid
- Number of teens working on project who are a) paid, b) unpaid
- Number of teens employed by the agency
- Number of people served by the project
- Describe the organization requesting funds from TCR
- Has this group worked together in the past? If so, what kind of work have they done (community activities, projects, etc.)?

PROJECT INFORMATION

- Describe the project for which the group is seeking TCR funding
- What are the major goals of the project, and how does the group propose to meet these goals?

• Rate the following according to categories of Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Need more information:

a) Teen involvement in decision-making and leadership

b) Realism, organization and planning

c) Degree to which the project fulfills a real community need

- Will the project result in a new teen service?
- Does the agency have plans to follow up on the project? What are the plans for follow up?
- Can the agency continue the project after TCR funds have been expended? What are their plans for continuation?
- Do the project's participants have plans to evaluate the impact of their project? How will they evaluate the project?
- Does the agency have adequate plans to provide training to participants? What are some of the areas of training most needed (or that you anticipate to be most needed)?
- What would happen to the project if TCR were not available as a potential funding source? Does the agency have any other ideas for funding?

RECOMMENDATIONS

_____ This project should be funded

_____ This project should be considered for funding, with the following concerns:

_____ This project should not be considered in its present form, for the following reasons:

Amount requested: _____

Amount recommended: _____

Overall rationale for recommendation:

1st Grants Committee meeting #1- Small group agenda

- Assign a note-taker.
- Stress that the goal of the small groups is to generate questions that staff will work on answering before the next Grants Committee meeting.
- Read written assessments (10 minutes).
- Go through each project that the team reviewed. (Each group will have these projects listed on newsprint.) Generate all questions, concerns, etc. Minimal discussion.
- Decide if the proposals are in the correct categories, or if they should be moved around.
- Record all questions raised.
- Identify places where cuts could be made.
- If there are no questions on a proposal and the group feels that the proposal should be recommended as is, this should be recorded.

Agenda for Award Ceremony

- Welcome and Review of Agenda and Purpose of Meeting
- Introductions: Name, where from, your birthday and your sign
- Stand-Up — Sit Down

Need to develop a list of 15 questions, with some questions relating to your project: Is it with schools, children, teens; focusing on drugs, violence, racism; use T-shirts (!), events, and so on

- Groupings of Projects

In groups of two

- Go over what your project is
- What are your project goals
- Easiest and hardest things about your project
- Discuss training and support needs
- Report Back - Full group:

Go around and have a rep. from each group tell briefly about their project, say the hardest and easiest things about making the project happen, and main area where you think you will need support.

- Break into *individual* project groups and assess needs and fill out TCR form
- Explain follow-up process. Each team will review the forms and be in touch with their groups: either to just check in or to set up a specific technical assistance meeting.
- Evaluation
- Hand-out-the-checks ceremony. Each TCR team hands checks to their groups. (Photos!!)

- Also, hand out names, addresses and phone numbers of grantees for networking purposes

Technical Assistance Assessment Questionnaire

- Name of organization
- Title of funded project
- Names of those completing assessment

(For each of the areas listed below, teens are asked to indicate which is true for their group a) training definitely needed, b) some training needed, or c) no training needed. At the end they are asked for any information that might help TCR assist their group to expand its present capabilities)

PROJECT-RELATED TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

- Develop clear project goals
- Planning skills
- Group meeting skills
- Communication and feedback
- Fundraising
- Getting media coverage
- Outreach
- Evaluation of project

GROUP-BUILDING TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

- Authority and management skills
- Contracting for expected behavior
- Conflict resolution

OPERATION OF THE ORGANIZATION

Site and Equipment

Location

The following is list of the basic considerations in choosing a location for the organization:

- Neighborhood reflects constituency
- Relatively safe and non-threatening, including after dark
- Transportation - easy for teens to get there
- Wheelchair accessible

TCR is a city-wide agency seeking to reach teens in all of Boston's diverse neighborhoods. It is important that the organization be located in a neighborhood that reflects some of the communities with which TCR works. Ideally, the neighborhood will be multi-racial, easily accessible and non-threatening.

In addition, sharing space with other groups in the same building can provide opportunities for cross-fertilization and the diversification of programs.

Space and equipment

Given the activities and staffing patterns of the organization, the space and equipment requirements are as follows:

- Large meeting space to comfortably fit 30 people. Needs to be well-lit, with walls to hang sheets of newsprint. Should be comfortable, but not for sleeping (long squishy couches are not helpful). In addition to holding workshops and meetings in this room, it is good to be able to offer the space to other youth groups, maximizing collaboration and cross-fertilization of programs.
- Work room / office for peer leaders with a couple of work tables for laying out flyers, doing mailings, and so on. This room should also contain a word processor and two phone lines for use by the peer leaders. Ideally each peer leader should have his/her own desk or work area within this room.
- 2 Offices - one for the Director and one for the Program Director
- Bathroom
- (Kitchen) - is not critical, but is optimal, as the staff go through a lot of food, and facilities to prepare food would be both convenient and cost-efficient. At the very least a refrigerator is needed.

- Equipment (Summary)
  - Work tables
  - 3 computers (1 with graphic and layout capacity for flyers, 1 for Director, 1 word processor for work room)
  - 4 phone lines, (1 for work room, 1 for Program Assistant, 1 for Director)
  - Refrigerator
  - Comfortable chairs, rug, etc. for meeting space
  - Office furniture

Personnel

Positions and responsibilities

Currently TCR Boston has the following staff:

- Executive Director - full time
- Program Director - full time
- Program Assistant - half time
- 6 Teen Staff / Peer Leaders - 10 hours per week
- Training consultant

The following are brief descriptions of each of the three adult staff positions:

The *Executive Director* is responsible for all aspects of managing a non-profit organization, including:

- Board, mission, and program development
- Setting up and monitoring financial control systems
- Short and long-range planning
- Evaluation
- Personnel management
- Fundraising

During the pilot year the Director was also involved in direct work with the peer leaders, including the planning of events and activities, training the peer leaders, and overseeing the various stages of the grants process.

The *Program Director* is responsible for the following:

- Managing and supervising the day to day work of the six member teen staff
- Direct management responsibility for the grants program
- Development and coordination of technical assistance for funded sites
- Development and coordination of quarterly newsletter
- Working with teen staff to develop monthly enrichment activities
- Coordinating the annual Tribute to Teens awards ceremony
- Working with the Director to develop new program initiatives

The *Program Assistant* assists the Program Director in his/her activities, in whatever ways are most needed at any given time. On an ongoing basis the Program Assistant is responsible for:

- Helping to prepare and run the afternoon meetings with the peer leaders
- Day-time support work, following up with necessary logistics for the community projects with which the peer leaders are involved.

(See Epilogue for a discussion on the inadequacy of current staff capacity, as well as race and age criteria.)

Funding

In 1986, the Boston Foundation decided to support the founding of TCR through a start-up grant, covering expenses for the first year. This was done with the understanding that the funding base would be diversified as quickly as possible. Over the five years that followed, the number of foundations, banks, and corporations funding TCR has grown each year, with the Boston Foundation reducing its support accordingly . An initial budget of $80,000 supported by one foundation has grown, in five years, to a budget of $225,000 supported by 11 foundations, 3 banks, and 7 corporations.

Ongoing fundraising, and the need to develop long-range funding strategies to provide more security for operations year to year, constitutes a significant job responsibility at TCR. TCR is currently investigating ways of diversifying its funding base beyond the foundation/corporate annual grants, an ongoing challenge that any similar organization will have to face. Below are some pointers that may be helpful in seeking funding for programs designed after the model presented here.

1) TCR currently receives its funding from private sources who are grant-giving entities. Part of TCR's function is to then channel funds to youth groups in the community. Hence, there is the basis to present TCR as a natural conduit for philanthropic dollars coming from large grant-giving organizations who want to ensure that their dollars are used in a cost-effective way at the grassroots level, catalyzing youth organizing for positive community change. In understanding this perspective, foundations which initially "don't support programs like TCR" will often reverse their position and contribute funding.

2) In raising money for personnel costs, TCR points out to potential funders that 40 - 50% of the staff time goes to supporting the grants process and providing technical assistance to teen groups before, during, and after the grants process. Supporting and funding groups of teens is very different from funding existing non-profits. It requires extra technical assistance time, in addition to the administrative work required to get funding for the grants, determine grantees, and

distribute the funding. For a $5000 grant to a youth group, $2500 is required in staff time to support the process. Foundations are asked to contribute to personnel costs required to channel their grant monies to community based efforts.

3) Another strategy in pursuing funding is to go to corporations in specific neighborhoods, asking them to sponsor a TCR project in that neighborhood. This could be done with annual or multi-year projects. It provides a public relations opportunity for the corporation, and can provide a link between the funder and the community project funded. This can be extended to donating space, equipment, volunteer resources, etc.

Public Relations

TCR's public relations and media work has three goals: to publicize the work of teens in the community; to publicize the effectiveness of the TCR model; and to influence and educate the general public, policy makers, and elected officials about youth concerns and ways in which youth can be and are involved in decision-making around important issues. The Program Director attempts to obtain local media coverage to achieve these goals. Radio, television and print media are alerted by sending out a media advisory prior to an event. Follow-up calls are made to encourage media coverage and determine who will be there and what their needs will be. Information packets are distributed. At the event itself, the Program Director acts as a TCR representative and spokesperson or brings the media to the peer leaders and others to speak to the media. After the event, she sends out a press release and photos with captions, and then makes follow-up calls to promote coverage. All the coverage is collected for the TCR archive.

The Director and Program Director, with the peer leaders, also speak on behalf of the organization at various events and on television and radio. The organization proactively seeks media opportunities where the peer leaders or the organization can be featured.

Several Board members have been very active in helping to attract media attention for TCR. The TCR staff has met with the publicity committee a number of times to strategize possible story angles, get media contacts, and plan long and short range goals for TCR media coverage. Some Board members have made calls to their contacts and talked to media representatives at events. One Board member who specializes in public relations taught the Program Director how to write media advisories, press releases and photo captions, has served as photographer for TCR events, and has contributed invaluable advice and experience to the process.

For more information about the program described in this booklet, contact:
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